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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vol. 16, No. 4

October, 1933

	Page
The Distribution of Land in British West Florida, <i>by Cecil Johnson, Ph.D.</i> .....	539
The Domestic Animals and Plants of French Louisiana as Mentioned in the Literature with Reference to Sources, Varieties and Uses, <i>by Lauren C. Post</i> .....	554
A Lawsuit Over the Right to Sell the Office of Notary in Louisiana During the French Regime (1769). <i>Transcription by the late Heloise H. Cruzat, translation by Sally Dart, introduction by Henry P. Dart.</i> .....	587
A History of Concordia Parish, Louisiana, VIII, <i>by R. D. Calhoun</i> .....	598
History of the American Party in Louisiana, V, <i>by W. Darrell Overdyke</i> .....	608
Rapides Parish, Louisiana, A History, V, <i>by G. P. Whittington</i> .....	628
The Interregnum in Louisiana in 1861, III, <i>by Lane C. Kendall</i> .....	639
Fort Jesup, Fort Selden, Camp Sabine, Camp Salubrity, Four Forgotten Frontier Army Posts of Western Louisiana, IV, <i>by J. Fair Hardin.</i> .....	670
New Orleans and the War of 1812, III, <i>by R. McC. B. Adams</i>	681

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

October, 1937

Vol. 15, No. 4

Page

329	The Distribution of the ...
334	The Domestic Animals and Plants of ...
337	A Lawless Over the ...
338	A History of Louisiana Parish ...
339	History of the ...
340	Rapides Parish, Louisiana, A History, V. by ...
341	The ...
342	Four ...
343	New Orleans and the War of 1812, III ...



# THE LOUISIANA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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## THE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN BRITISH WEST FLORIDA

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THE BRITISH PROVINCE of West Florida was created by the royal proclamation of October 7, 1763. It comprised an area now included in the southern halves of Mississippi and Alabama and the extreme eastern and western fragments of Louisiana and Florida, respectively.<sup>1</sup> In administration it was a typical royal colony except that it was supported by an annual grant from the British Parliament. Save for two articles in the Mississippi Valley Historical Review by Professor E. Carter and one by the present writer which is to appear in the same quarterly, West Florida has been neglected by modern historical writers. The purpose of this paper is to examine the several methods by which land was conveyed to individuals and to draw conclusions as to the efficiency and the influence of the system.

In the American colonies as a whole two general ways for the distribution of land were employed. In New England grants were customarily issued by the general court or legislature to a group of individuals or proprietors. In the seventeenth century the members of such a group were bound together by ties of blood,

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<sup>1</sup> The boundaries of the colony were: The Gulf of Mexico (including all islands within six leagues of the shore) Lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas, and the so-called Iberville River on the south; the Mississippi River on the west; a line drawn due east from the confluence of the Yazoo and the Mississippi on the north; and the Apalachicola River on the east.

friendship, and religion, forming a congregation, and any attempt to understand the distribution of land in New England without considering the social, moral, and ethical ideals of these congregations will necessarily fail. The groups distributed the land to individuals in small parcels under regulations which were remarkably uniform in spirit and purpose. Thus were formed the settlements or towns so characteristic of New England.<sup>2</sup> The quit-rent, save to a very limited extent in New Hampshire and Maine and occasionally in Massachusetts, was not prescribed.

In the colonies south of New England the land was distributed to individuals by the crown or by proprietors or groups of proprietors to whom the king had given large areas. The grant by the king to the individual and to the proprietors, and by the proprietors to the individual, was always subject to an annual quit-rent, which might be a fat buck, a few arrow heads, or a small money payment. The quit-rent was in no sense comparable to the rent of modern times as it was not a payment for the use of the land and the amount was not in proportion to its value. It was a commutation of the service to which all holders of free land were subject in medieval times, an acknowledgement of the higher ownership of the king or proprietor.<sup>3</sup> The quit-rent, though small in individual cases, in the aggregate was a sizable amount and was an important source of revenue. In few cases was it efficiently collected, the settlers were chronically in arrears, and attempts to collect it caused much friction between grantor and grantee. Some of the lands, notably in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina, were erected into manors, but the jurisdictions thereby established were rarely exercised.

By the time of the French and Indian War desirable land in the English colonies of the Atlantic seaboard was becoming scarce. It had been granted to settlers or was in the hands of speculators who demanded a higher price than the crown or the original proprietors had asked. The increase in population, from natural causes and from immigration, tended to crowd the colonies and to cause the pioneers and backwoodsmen to press against and infringe upon the Indian frontier. The invasion of Indian lands gave offense to the natives whose friendship at this time was very

<sup>2</sup> See Akagi, R. H., *The Town Proprietors of New England*. He fails to emphasize, however, the religious element.

<sup>3</sup> See Bond, B. W., *The Quit-rent System in the American Colonies*, and especially the Introduction by Professor Charles M. Andrews.

important to the British. With the acquisition by England of the territory east of the Mississippi by the Treaty of Paris, the colonists looked forward to the occupation of this vast domain which had been gained, to a certain extent, at least, by their own skill and efforts. It was not likely that the necessity of maintaining the good will of the Indians, however important it might be to the home government, would weigh heavily with them; nor would they view with equanimity their exclusion from such a broad area because of questions of Indian policy. According to an authority on this phase of colonial history the main purpose of the Proclamation of 1763 was to quiet the fears of the Indians, by assuring them of the continued possession of their lands, and to divert the tide of westward expansion to the south and southwest, by establishing the new provinces of East and West Florida, where good lands might be readily secured, with especially favorable terms to those who had served in the late war.<sup>4</sup>

The very circumstances of the creation of the province, as well as the exigencies of settling new territories, made the distribution of land in West Florida a matter of fundamental importance. On the whole the plan used was that in vogue in the colonies; but there were certain variations peculiar to East and West Florida. All land distributed in the province under consideration was granted by the governor (or in his absence by the lieutenant governor) under the authority of royal mandamuses, the royal instructions to the governor, or the Proclamation of 1763. It is now in order to examine these sources of authority.

Orders in the king's name issued by the English Privy Council were called mandamuses. Such orders for land were characteristic of the Floridas and to a certain extent of the period; between 1764 and 1777 mandamuses were issued for lands in Georgia, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Canada, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New York, and East and West Florida. It was only in the last four of these provinces, however, that the number of grants was significant; there were thirty-nine in Nova Scotia, sixty-seven in New York, forty-five in West Florida, and more than two hundred in East Florida.<sup>5</sup> Most of these were issued in the four years that followed the close of the French and Indian War, and doubtless found their inspiration in the great wave of

<sup>4</sup> Alvord, C. W., "The Genesis of the Proclamation of 1763." *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, XXXVI, 20-52.

<sup>5</sup> *Acts of the Privy Council, (Colonial Series) IV, appendix V; Ibid., V, appendix V.*



speculation which accompanied England's undisputed claim to such vast territory. They varied in size from two thousand to one hundred thousand acres.

On recommendation of the Board of Trade the Privy Council, on November 14, 1763, authorized the insertion of advertisements in the *London Gazette* inviting persons to offer proposals for settling, at their own expense, townships in the new governments of Florida with protestant inhabitants, under such conditions of quit-rent, cultivation, and improvement as might be thought necessary and expedient.<sup>6</sup> In due time a notice to this effect appeared in the *Gazette* and was copied in *Scots Magazine*.<sup>7</sup> Interested parties were invited to communicate with John Pownall, secretary of the board. This advertisement doubtless served to focus the attention of speculators on the Floridas. The fact that East Florida was better known and more accessible than her sister province perhaps accounts for the greater demand for land there.

The steps in the procedure of issuing an order in council for a grant illustrate the operation of the machinery for imperial control of the colonies. A petition presented to the Privy Council was referred first to the council as a committee and then to the Board of Trade; this body reported back to the committee, the committee to the council, and the council issued a formal order. In case the petition was presented to the Board of Trade at the beginning, a representation was made by the board to the council; the council referred this to the committee and issued a formal order on the report of that body.<sup>8</sup> The mandamus was addressed to the governor or the commander in chief of the province and directed him to grant the land under the specified conditions.

The terms for all the mandamus grants in the Floridas were practically the same. The grantee was required to settle the land with white protestants within ten years of the date of the grant in the proportion of one person for every hundred acres; and if one-third of the grant were not thus settled in three years, the whole would revert to the king; likewise any part not thus settled in ten years would similarly revert. Beginning in May, 1767, this condition was worded in such a way as to prevent the required persons from being drawn from England and Ireland. The an-

<sup>6</sup> *Acts of the Privy Council*, IV, 610. The Board of Trade was an advisory body which served as a clearing house for information on colonial affairs.

<sup>7</sup> *Scots Magazine*, XXV, 627.

<sup>8</sup> *Acts of the Privy Council*, V, appendix V.



nual quit-rent of one-half penny sterling per acre was due on half the grant after the expiration of five years, and on the whole after ten years; lands suitable for military and naval purposes were reserved to the king as well as all mines of gold, silver, copper, lead, and coal; if any of the land appeared, from the surveyor's report, well adapted to the growth of hemp or flax, the grantee was required to sow annually and to cultivate these valuable commodities in the proportion of one acre to every thousand of the grant.<sup>9</sup>

The forty-five orders in council which were issued for land in West Florida called for approximately three hundred and fifty thousand acres. The individual allotments varied in size from two thousand to twenty-five thousand acres. If all the lands which the royal orders provided for had been granted and the conditions of the grants met, the province would have gone through a period of rapid development. Such, however, was not the case; perhaps not more than half these orders were ever presented in West Florida for execution; and there was practically no effort on the part of those to whom grants were made to meet conditions. Some of the finest and most favorably situated land in the colony was thus placed beyond the reach of actual settlers. Governor Chester, soon after his arrival at Pensacola in 1770, made note of the large tracts embraced in some of these unimproved grants, and asked the British Secretary of State if they might not be forfeited to the crown; this official, however, though admitting the situation was undesirable, was unwilling or unable to give the necessary permission.

Among the grants actually surveyed for patentees who did not reside in the province, were tracts of twenty thousand and five thousand acres on the Mississippi for the Earl of Eglington and Samuel Hannay, and tracts of twenty thousand and ten thousand acres for Lord Ellibank and Count Bentinck near Pensacola.<sup>10</sup> The Eglington grant, located as it was in the fertile district around Natchez, was an especial grievance to Chester. Apparently Thaddeus Lyman, to whom the land authorized by an

<sup>9</sup> *Acts of the Privy Council*, V, appendix V; C. O. 5, 607, pp. 216-225. (the Colonial Office Papers in Classification 5 referring to West Florida may be found in the Library of Congress in the form of photostats or transcripts). This is a mandamus for land for Phineas Lyman. The requirement in regard to hemp and flax was in accord with the mercantilist principle of encouraging the production of commodities valuable to the mother country.

<sup>10</sup> Map of West Florida, by Samuel Lewis, 1772, from the surveys of Elias Durnford; a most interesting map showing all grants which were surveyed before August, 1771. (Photostat in Library of Congress; original in Crown Collection, British Museum.)

order in council for his father, Phineas Lyman, was granted, was one of the few grantees to make a real effort to settle his holding. Amos Ogden was in the province for a while and imported some settlers, but it appears that he took out land for these on the basis of family right, rather than settle them on his tract of twenty-five thousand acres which was laid out near Natchez. So much for mandamuses.

The instructions issued by the Privy Council to the governor contained full and specific directions as to the local distribution of land. As soon as possible after his arrival he was to appoint some competent person to make a survey of the physical characteristics of the province and to make recommendations as to the best method of settlement. But as such a task would take some time, he was to begin land distribution at once under such means as appeared expedient from the general information he was able to collect.<sup>11</sup> Inasmuch as experience had shown that from the standpoint of civil co-operation and protection from the Indians it was more profitable to settle planters in townships, he was instructed to cause such areas to be laid out in units of about twenty thousand acres each. In every township he was to reserve a sufficient space for military purposes and suitable land for the production of naval timber; in or near each township a particular spot was to be reserved for a church with four hundred acres of adjacent land for the maintenance of a minister and two hundred for a schoolmaster.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, it may be parenthetically stated, the conditions accompanying the occupation of West Florida did not make for such an orderly settlement, and with the exception of Campbell Town, which was a complete failure, the township system was not used. As great inconveniences had arisen in other colonies, because huge tracts had been granted to persons who had never cultivated or settled them, the governor was warned to take care that all grants which he made should be in proportion to the ability of the grantee to cultivate. Every master (or mistress) of a family who came to the colony was entitled to one hundred acres for himself and fifty acres for every black or white man, woman, or child in his establishment actually present at the time of making the grant.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Instruction 44. Governor Johnstone's instructions are found in C. O. 5: 201, pp. 181-177; numbers 44-56 relate to the granting of land.

<sup>12</sup> Instructions 46 and 47.

<sup>13</sup> Instruction 51.

This was known in West Florida as the "family right." Persons who desired to take up more land than they were entitled to by family right might do so in amounts up to one thousand acres if the governor thought they were able to cultivate and improve it, provided they paid, on the day of the grant, to the receiver-general of quit-rents, five shillings for every fifty acres. Land acquired in this way was by "purchase right." Two years after the grant had been made it became subject to an annual quit-rent. The original instructions to George Johnstone, the first governor, provided that this should be at the rate of two shillings a hundred acres, which was the amount frequently required in other royal provinces, but an additional instruction of May 16, 1764, issued doubtless before Johnstone left England, raised this to one-half penny per acre, or four shillings two pence a hundred.<sup>14</sup>

The conditions of cultivation and improvement were given in great detail. For every fifty acres accounted plantable the patentee was required to clear and till at least three acres within three years; for every fifty considered barren he was required to pasture within three years three neat cattle; if no part of the grant was fit for cultivation without manuring, the grantee was obligated to erect a good dwelling house, at least twenty feet in length and sixteen in width, in addition to meeting the requirement in regard to neat cattle; if any land was stony and fit neither for cultivation nor for pasture, the employing of one good hand in a quarry or mine within three years and for a period of three years would be considered sufficient improvement for every one hundred acres. The fulfillment of these conditions would insure the patentee against forfeiture; after they had been met he was directed to offer proof at the court of the county wherein he resided and to have such proof certified in the register's office.<sup>15</sup> All the terms and conditions were to be recorded in the patent.<sup>16</sup>

The governor was directed to see that each grant contained a proportional number of profitable and unprofitable acres; that the breadth of each grant be one-third of the length; and that the length of any tract did not extend along the banks of any river, "but into the mainland, that thereby the said grantees may have each a convenient share of what accommodation the said river

<sup>14</sup> C. O. 5: 599, pp. 168-169; Acts of the Privy Council, IV, 668-669.

<sup>15</sup> Instruction 51.

<sup>16</sup> Instruction 54.



may afford for navigation or otherwise."<sup>17</sup> In order that people elsewhere might be informed about West Florida the governor was instructed to issue a proclamation setting forth the terms of settlement and the natural advantages of the province; he was to take the proper means for having this published in all the colonies of North America.<sup>18</sup> The governor was to consider ways and means for the most effective collection of quit-rents and prevention of land frauds; if he deemed a law on this subject necessary, he was to prepare the main points in such a bill and present it to the Board of Trade for consideration.<sup>19</sup> Each year he was to require the surveyor general or some other competent person to inspect all grants that had been made and to make a report on the progress of the grantees in meeting the conditions; this report was to be forwarded to the Board of Trade.<sup>20</sup>

The greater part of the land granted under the authority of the governor's instructions was in rural districts and in blocks of one hundred to one thousand acres, but towns were laid out and lots granted in four places in the province, namely, Pensacola, Mobile, Campbell Town and Manchac or Harwich, at the point of the separation of the Iberville from the Mississippi. Pensacola for many years prior to 1763 had been a settlement and military post under the Spanish. It was in a state of decay, however, and one of the first acts of the English civil government was to lay it out anew and to grant town lots under a reasonable quit-rent to those who appeared able to improve them.<sup>21</sup> Mobile, inasmuch as it was a larger settlement at the time of British occupation, was not as completely reorganized but lots were measured off and granted under similar conditions. Campbell Town, at the mouth of the Escambia River, was a more rural community than either Pensacola or Mobile. Lands there were granted to the French protestants who came over with Lieutenant Governor Montfort Browne to introduce the production of wine and silk. Because of the unhealthful location, the erratic leadership of the French pastor, Peter Levrier, and the unstableness of the settlers, the project was a failure in spite of the fact that the protestants were provisioned for a while from the provincial contingent fund;

<sup>17</sup> Instruction 52.

<sup>18</sup> Instruction 53.

<sup>19</sup> Instruction 55.

<sup>20</sup> Instruction 56.

<sup>21</sup> Minutes of the West Florida Council, December, 1764, and January and February, 1765. (C. O. 5: 632.)

the town, as such, was soon abandoned. Manchac had been regarded as a place of importance from the first occupation of the province; it was the key to the only possible inland water-way communication between the eastern and western parts of the colony; it was strategically located for the interception of the valuable fur trade which came down the Mississippi; from there trade could be carried on with the Indians, with the English who were fast settling the eastern banks of the Mississippi, and with the French who resided in and near the prosperous village of Pointe Coupee, which was across and not far up the river. Fort Bute was established at Manchac in 1765 but was abandoned in 1768. A town was laid out there in 1770 soon after the arrival of Governor Peter Chester who wrote enthusiastically of the western part of the province. Secretary of State Hillsborough appeared to favor the re-establishing of the military post but Lord Dartmouth, who succeeded him in 1772, was not an advocate of westward expansion. After 1777, a number of town lots were granted, largely to officers of the provincial government, under conditions similar to those for lots in Pensacola and Mobile with the addition of a small money payment.<sup>22</sup> But the war with Spain which broke out in 1779 and the resulting hostilities with the Spanish in Louisiana prevented the development of the new town.

Having examined the part of orders in council and the governor's instructions in the distribution of land, it is now in order to note the part of the Proclamation of 1763. This document, it has already been pointed out, was issued in part for the purpose of diverting immigration from the Indian lands. Inasmuch as the king was desirous on all occasions, the proclamation stated, of testifying his royal approbation regarding the conduct and bravery of the officers and soldiers of the armies, the governors of Quebec and East and West Florida were empowered to grant, without fee or reward, to such reduced officers who had served North America during the late war, quantities of land, in accordance with an annexed schedule, with exemption from quit-rent for a period of ten years. The applicants for grants, however, must be actually residing in the colonies in which the grants were made and must apply personally. The terms of improvement were precisely the same as on lands granted on family and purchase rights. A field officer was entitled to five thousand acres,

<sup>22</sup> Petitions, Warrants, and Grants of Land, May, 1774-April, 1777, (manuscript volume in the Library of Congress); C. O. 5: 610.

a captain to three thousand, a subaltern or staff officer to two thousand, a non-commissioned officer to two hundred, and a private to fifty. Like quantities were offered to reduced officers of the navy who had served at the capture of Louisburg or Quebec.<sup>23</sup> Such were the terms of this bonus to the veterans of the French and Indian War. Such a plan was, of course, open to great abuse unless it were very carefully and conscientiously administered. The speculative spirit, which was characteristic of the times and apparent in all places where desirable land was available, was not conducive to careful administration. In fact, after 1770 the provincial officers most concerned in the distribution of land namely, the governor, the provisional secretary, and the surveyor, were very much involved in speculation. A large number of grants were made under the authority of the Proclamation of 1763.

The procedure in securing a grant in West Florida was complicated, expensive, and slow. There was no general land office, but the office of the provincial secretary at Pensacola was the headquarters for land business. A person desiring a grant drew up a petition (or had it drawn up), setting forth his eligibility for a grant under a mandamus, the governor's instructions, or the Proclamation of 1763, and requesting a certain number of acres, to which he claimed a right. The petition was read in the provincial council and accepted, rejected, or postponed by the governor on the advice of the council. In the event the petition was accepted (and a vast majority of them were), a warrant was issued by the governor to the surveyor general directing him to mark out the desired land and to return, within six months, the survey with a general description of the natural characteristics of the land, together with a plat. The survey was accordingly made and the description and plat brought in. The governor then issued a fiat directed to the secretary and the attorney general instructing them to draw up a grant for the survey in accordance with the usual terms. The final patent, usually on a printed form after 1769 (except those made as a result of royal warrants), contained a description of the land and a statement of the terms under which the grant was made. It was issued under the seal of the province and was signed by the governor in council. To the grant proper was usually attached a number of certificates, namely, that the grant had passed the secretary's office, signed by the secretary or his deputy; an abstract of the return of the

<sup>23</sup> *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, XXXVI, 14-19.



survey, signed by the surveyor general; a certificate that pursuant to a fiat issued by the governor the grant had been examined and found without error, signed by the attorney general; and finally an acknowledgment that the grant and the above certificates had been examined and recorded. In the summer of 1774 Governor Chester decided that the consent of the council was not necessary in issuing warrants of survey and in signing grants for reduced officers and for those holding mandamuses.<sup>24</sup>

This cumbersome process, patterned after the practice in other colonies, was the subject of much complaint, especially because of the expenses that were encountered at every step. There was a fee for the preparation of the petition and another to the messenger for reading it in council; a payment must be made for making out the warrant of survey and the governor must be remunerated for signing it; the fee of the surveyor was determined by the size of the grant and its distance from Pensacola; and naturally, there was an additional charge for the plat which accompanied the return. The provincial secretary must be paid for preparing the grant and passing it through his office; the governor was again rewarded for signing the grant and attaching the great seal; the attorney general received a fee for his examination of the patent. When Thaddeus Lyman received in 1775 twenty thousand acres, on the authority of a mandamus which had been issued to his father, he was forced to allocate three thousand acres to men who advanced the funds necessary for issuing the grant.<sup>25</sup> There is small wonder that provincial officials encouraged the granting of land when one considers the lucrative returns which they enjoyed therefrom.

In 1774 for a grant of five hundred acres or less there were seventeen fees due the governor, secretary, and messenger, and these amounted to nineteen Spanish dollars, and eight and a half reals; of this sum, six dollars and seven and a half reals went to the governor, twelve dollars and six reals to the secretary, and five reals to the messenger. It is interesting to note that these fees were reckoned in Spanish rather than in English money, and that they did not include either the fees of the surveyor, which

<sup>24</sup> Preface to *Petitions, Warrants, and Grants of Land to Officers of the Army and Navy, 1774-1777*, (manuscript volume in Library of Congress). The steps in issuing a grant were gleaned from a careful study of the land records and Council Minutes. They are not enumerated in any one place.

<sup>25</sup> Petition of Thaddeus Lyman to Governor Chester, C. O. 5: 607, pp. 216-225.

at this time were levied in shillings and pence, or the fee of the attorney general.<sup>26</sup> The surveyor's fees on a grant of five hundred acres were about four pounds sterling.

In connection with the procedure in granting land it is interesting to observe the process by which lands changed hands. It would appear from this casual observation that in a frontier province such as West Florida, where population was sparse and land plentiful, there would be little occasion for private sale of land. But the speculative fever of the times which is the key to the explanation of a great part of the land history of the province, caused great activity of this kind. Town lots in Pensacola and improved and unimproved plantations frequently changed hands; and, if one is to believe the records, the consideration was usually in gold—Spanish milled dollars. The term occurs repeatedly and the number of dollars mentioned occasionally is more than a thousand; yet it is difficult to believe that there was much specie in the province, for both governors and military commanders frequently referred, especially in the period before 1770, to the scarcity of hard money. The means of transferring land from one person to another was usually by "lease and release." The first step taken by a person wishing to buy a certain tract was to pay a few shillings, "lawful money of Great Britain," and to agree to pay the owner one pepper corn, "if the same shall be lawfully demanded." This gave him a lease on the land for one year. Such a lease, the indenture stated, was for the purpose of putting the lessee in actual possession of the land, in order that he might be qualified, under the statute made "for transferring uses into possession," to receive a grant and a release of the reversion and inheritance of the tract, from the owner for himself and heirs. The next step was another indenture between the owner and the lessee reciting the terms and purposes of the lease and stating that in consideration of a certain sum, this time not nominal (usually given in Spanish milled dollars, but sometimes in pounds sterling, and occasionally in both), the owner had transferred the carefully described tract to the lessee. To this was usually attached a certificate that the purchase price had actually

<sup>26</sup> Fly leaf, Secretary's Office Account Book 1774-1778, (manuscript volume in Library of Congress). The fees that were actually collected in this apparently unimportant province are almost unbelievable. In the year 1777 the fees of the secretary and governor amounted to about 11,000 Spanish dollars, of which approximately 8,000 went to the secretary. Much more than half of the 11,000 came from land fees. (West Florida Secretary's Account Book 1775-1780, manuscript volume in the Library of Congress.)



been paid.<sup>27</sup> The price varied, of course, according to the location and quality of the land, and to the improvements which had been made upon it. In 1774 Edwin Thomas, a surgeon, sold Attorney General Wegg a tract of five hundred acres on the Mississippi for two hundred and fifty Spanish milled dollars.<sup>28</sup> In 1775 Thomas Wescott sold a tract of three hundred acres on the Amite, which had been granted to him in 1772, for three hundred and fifty Spanish milled dollars.<sup>29</sup>

From a perusal of the records one comes to the inevitable conclusion that the distribution of land in West Florida was administered in a very loose and inefficient manner. There is much to indicate that the conditions of the grants were frequently ignored. Around Mobile, where travellers frequently commented on the herds of black cattle, and in the western part of the province, where the land was more suitable for agriculture, the provisions of the grant were doubtless met in a number of cases; but it is probable that a large number of grants were never occupied. There is no evidence to show that an appreciable amount of quit-rent was ever collected, though the receiver general reported on one occasion that he had in his possession more than four hundred pounds sterling which had been received for grants made on purchase rights. Not only was the distribution inefficiently managed and were the terms of the patents rarely met, but there were undoubtedly "jobs" and grave irregularities. The conditions set forth in the Proclamation of 1763 invited abuse. Though this document provided that grants should be made only to reduced officers actually resident in the province, land was given to almost every military or naval officer whose duty brought him to West Florida.

The name of Philip Livingston, Junior,<sup>30</sup> is very closely connected with many questionable transactions. He was by deputation of the patentee, who did not reside in the colony, provincial secretary. Chester soon made him a member of the council and receiver general. He acquired several other offices and in 1778

<sup>27</sup> See C. O. 5: 601-606, for a large number of these leases and releases; also manuscript volumes of conveyances in Library of Congress.

<sup>28</sup> West Florida Conveyances of Land, April 2, 1774-October 1, 1775, pp. 329-334, (manuscript volume in Library of Congress).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 457-461.

<sup>30</sup> He was a member of the famous Livingston family of New York but had been in London at the time of the appointment of Governor Chester, with whom he had come to the colony as private secretary under the promise of preferment in the way of an appointment to a lucrative provincial office. Under the patronage of Chester he became a person of importance. The activity of his relatives in New York during the Revolution was a source of embarrassment to the governor.

his enemies claimed that, either personally or by deputy, he held no less than nine posts. He was very much interested in the acquisition of land and his methods are illustrated by several transactions. In the summer of 1772 he purchased from five military and naval officers for two hundred and forty-eight Spanish dollars, five tracts, aggregating 2,950 acres, which had been granted to them in the preceding six weeks.<sup>31</sup> It is easy to conjecture, though difficult to prove, that Livingston suggested to these officers that they apply for grants and that in his official positions as provincial secretary and member of the council, as well as in his private capacity as friend and favorite of the governor, he did much to get the patents through the complicated granting process. In August of the same year he purchased from Chester, for three hundred and twenty-six Spanish dollars, five tracts, comprising 6,050 acres, which the governor had shortly before granted to himself.<sup>32</sup> On April 5, 1777, Chester granted Livingston eleven lots in Harwich.<sup>33</sup> It is not difficult to believe the charge made in 1778 that Livingston had by various means acquired the title to one hundred thousand acres.

There are numerous evidences that provincial officials were anxious to enrich themselves by the acquisition of land. A number received grants by royal mandamus. Among these were Lieutenant Governors Montfort Browne and Elias Durnford; James Bruce and Jacob Blackwell, customs collectors and councillors; Arthur Neil, ordnance storekeeper; and David Tait, sometime deputy surveyor and Indian commissioner. The officials were not over-scrupulous about granting land to themselves and each received generous portions. In a council meeting of February 4, 1772, petitions from Jane Chester, Rebecca Durnford, Ann Raincock, Rebecca Blackwell, Isabelle Bruce, and Elizabeth Hodge, praying grants of one thousand acres, each, were received and favorably acted upon. These ladies, of course, were the wives of the governor, the lieutenant governor, and four of the councillors.

In conclusion and by way of summary, it may be said that the land distribution in West Florida followed roughly the systems in operation in other royal colonies. The land was granted by the governor, usually with the consent of the council, under the au-

<sup>31</sup> C. O. 5: 605, pp. 503-524.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 490-493.

<sup>33</sup> Petitions, Warrants, and Grants of Land, May, 1774-April, 1777, (manuscript volume in Library of Congress.)

thority of royal mandamuses, instructions to the governor, or the Proclamation of 1763. The process of taking out a grant was complicated and the payment of numerous fees was necessary. Each grant was made under stated conditions, which were rarely met by the grantee, and subject to a quit-rent which was rarely paid. The spirit of speculation which was elsewhere so characteristic of the period was much in evidence in West Florida, and, seizing as it did a number of provincial officials, did much to promote looseness in administration. Lands were granted with a prodigal hand and only the large amount of good land available on the Mississippi and the early fall of the province to Spain prevented the scarcity of land from becoming a real problem.\*

\* Note by Editor of the Quarterly—The reader may be interested in the data accumulated in the Quarterly on some of the phases of Mr. Johnson's interesting paper. In Volume 12, pp. 630-644 (October, 1929), we printed the following documents:

1. A Patent from the King to Daniel Hickey for a tract of 500 acres on the Mississippi near Baton Rouge, dated September 6, 1768;
2. A Lease with right of reversion from Montfort Browne to Daniel Hickey for 300 acres in the District of Manchac, April 1, 1776;
3. Sale by John Allen Martin to Elihu Hall Bay of 700 acres near the Amite River, March 2, 1776, with a copy of the original plat of survey (La. Hist. Qy., Vol. 12, pp. 630-644, October, 1929).

In Volume 13, pp. 610-616 (October, 1930) the King's Proclamation and the Information accompanying the same.

In Volume 15, pp. 391- . July, 1932, the map referred to in the above.

ED. LA. HIST. QY.





THE DOMESTIC ANIMALS AND PLANTS OF FRENCH  
LOUISIANA AS MENTIONED IN THE LITERATURE  
WITH REFERENCE TO SOURCES, VARIETIES  
AND USES

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By LAUREN C. POST\*

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PREFACE

FOR MANY CENTURIES the different species and specialized varieties of domesticated plants and animals have had their frontiers extended with the conquest and occupation of new areas, sometimes only to be found unsuitable to the new environment, and other times to remain and become part of the agricultural complex. After 1492, a sort of plant exploration and diffusion was carried on in which wholesale transplantings were made between the Old World and the New as well as within each of those areas.

This paper is the result of the writer's curiosity to go through the literature of one colonial area to find if possible that phase of culture history.

The story lacks balance, but so did the agriculture and the literature. Much more emphasis was placed upon the "colonial products" than upon the subsistence crops, the fruits and the animals.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface .....	545
INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT .....	556
THE INDIAN CONTRIBUTIONS.....	557
The Use of Indian Clearings.....	557
The Indian Crops .....	558
THE PRE-FRENCH INTRODUCTIONS.....	559
EARLY INTRODUCTION BY IBERVILLE .....	560
THE ANIMALS .....	561
Horses .....	562
Cattle .....	563
Sheep and Goats.....	564
Pigs .....	565
Chickens .....	565
Bees .....	566
Cochineal .....	566
Summary Statement .....	566
THE PLANTS .....	567
Restrictions placed upon agriculture in Louisiana .....	567
Myrtle-wax .....	567
Silk (The Mulberry tree) .....	568
Tobacco .....	571
Indigo .....	573
Rice .....	575
Cotton .....	576
Sugar Cane .....	578
Potatoes .....	581
Wheat .....	581
Flax and Hemp.....	581
THE FRUITS .....	582
GENERAL SUMMARY .....	583
LITERATURE CITED .....	585

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

**D**OMESTICATED plants and animals from many parts of the world have entered into the agricultural complex of Louisiana. Some were contributions of the Aborigines, others are from Europe, and many are either directly or indirectly from the tropical areas where they had been cultivated under the relatively new tropical plantation agricultural system.

No type studies at present seem to have as their primary motive the telling of the story of how the different plants and animals are introduced into an area, and the experimentation which goes on before the proper crops and combinations are selected for production. This paper attempts to tell of the appropriation and introduction of these plants, as well as the conditions under which they worked into the agricultural system.

Obstacles to the development of agriculture seemed especially great in the early years of Louisiana. The lack of a suitable labor supply, either black or white, shortage of draft animals and tools, the occurrence of floods, hurricanes, and freezes were only some of the hindrances which had to be overcome. Furthermore, France placed restrictions upon the raising of certain crops which she could produce at home, and the rival nations and colonies were at times unwilling to furnish seeds and animals to be taken to Louisiana. In view of these handicaps, the general lack of information as to climatic conditions and agricultural technique and the political situation, it can readily be seen that the problem of acquired domestic plants and animals was an exceedingly difficult one. Likewise it is a difficult story to tell.

St. Domingue, the prosperous French colony of the West Indies with the plantation system well worked out, had a tremendous influence upon the agricultural development of Louisiana. It lay on the sailing route from France to Louisiana, and nearly all ships called at Cape Francois, now Cape Haitien, while sailing that route. Considerable exchange of goods and ideas went on between these two colonies, with St. Domingue supplying certain stores, plants, animals and possibly above all, ideas and technique in the business of plantation agriculture. Louisiana in return supplied subsistence crops such as corn, beans, rice, and a few products such as planks and bricks.

Observation and experimentation were necessary before a correct picture of the setting could be made. Early speculation



and propaganda had been comparable to the tales of mineral wealth in other parts of the continent. Even Remonville,<sup>1</sup> who had obtained much information on Louisiana, made the following recommendations to Pontchartrain:

Cocoons should also be taken out for the purpose of raising silk, together with persons acquainted with their management and the art of silk culture; these could easily instruct others, and even the female Indian, than which nothing could be easier. To render the trade in hides and wool more profitable, and to provide more abundantly for the inhabitants, it would be well to encourage the Indians to capture cows and lambs alive, which, while at the tender age could be easily tamed and domesticated.

This document merely shows how little was known of the country, and when compared with descriptions of the conditions suffered by the colonists brought over by John Law, it can be seen that much experimentation and expenditure were to be made before a profitable establishment could be made. Without Indian agriculture to take over subsistence, and West Indian agriculture to copy, French settlement in Louisiana might have been retarded for a century.

#### THE INDIAN CONTRIBUTIONS

*The Use of Indian Clearings.*—Louisiana lies in the Eastern Maize Food Area,<sup>2</sup> and the agriculture and subsistence of the various tribes concerned has been described by Swanton,<sup>3</sup> so little will be said here along that line except that the main cultivated crops were corn, beans, pumpkins, and tobacco. All four crops were immediately taken over by the French. Not only were the crops taken over, but in many cases the very fields of the Indians were appropriated. The clearing of new land was not an easy task, as the natural growth of trees, canes, brush, and grass thrived luxuriantly on the natural levees of the river which sloped gradually back to the cypress swamps. Tools, draft animals, and labor were scarce and expensive, all of which made the cleared lands of the Indians the more inviting. Frequent mention is made of the granting of concessions on old Indian village sites, or near

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin F. French, *Historical Collections of Louisiana and Florida*, New York, 1869, I, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Clark Wissler, *The American Indian*, New York, 1922, 13.

<sup>3</sup> John R. Swanton, *Indian Tribes of the Lower Mississippi Valley and the Adjacent Coast of the Gulf of Mexico*, Washington, 1911.

the villages. Among the earlier concessions made,<sup>4</sup> that of M. Paris Du Vernay was 28 leagues above New Orleans on the site of the old Bayougoula village, that of De Muys was at the Tensa village, that of Brossart Brothers was among the Natchitoches on the Red River, that of La Harpe in the Cadodaquis, that of De La Houssaye with the Natchez and others were made on the site of the old Choupitoula village. The primary cause of the Natchez Massacre was that Chopart, the commander of the post, had demanded that the Natchez move off of land which they had cleared for their fields.

*The Indian Crops.*—Corn, "the most useful and principal food of the people of the North and South America,"<sup>5</sup> has been underrated in importance because it enters into commerce only to a relatively minor degree, and exact figures on its production are not available. Spanish, French, and English colonists alike took over this crop and used it as a staple, but the latter two stocks of people have shifted, to a great extent, from corn to wheat for bread. The French colonists of Louisiana were not only forced to use corn, but were glad to get it during the first two decades of their settlement. Later, they became dependent upon rice to some extent. "The Illinois country was considered the granary of the colony"<sup>6</sup> because great quantities of wheat and flour were shipped to New Orleans. Although Louisiana is not in the "corn belt" and has never been noted as a corn producing state, in 1816<sup>7</sup> corn was put in first place as a crop.

The use of corn by the French began with their explorations and ran throughout their period and up to the present time. Few documents on general agriculture fail to mention it, but at the same time, few assign a definite value to it. The dependence of the French upon corn in 1710 is shown by the statement that:<sup>8</sup> "Bienville sold 150 barrels of corn, at four to five piastres each, thereby forcing the French soldiers and settlers into the woods to search for food." Its most frequent mention as an article of trade appears in lists of exports to the West Indies. These colonies were dependent for their food upon other colonies, both French and English, as their land was employed in the production of the more valuable "colonial products."

<sup>4</sup> French, *op. cit.*, I, 140.

<sup>5</sup> Antoine S. Le Page Du Pratz, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, Paris, 1758, III, 342.

<sup>6</sup> E. Bunner, *History of Louisiana*, New York, 1855, 95.

<sup>7</sup> William Darby, *A Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana*, New York, 1816, 138.

<sup>8</sup> Nancy Miller Surrey, *Commerce of Louisiana During the French Regime, 1699-1763*, New York, 1916, 419.



Beans were a pre-Columbian crop in Louisiana and were immediately used by the French. They were called "Apalaches" by the French because they were obtained from a tribe by that name, according to Du Pratz, but his next statement is open for investigation for he said that those Indians had obtained them from the English of Carolina who in turn had obtained them from Guinea.\* Due to the lack of definition of terms, there is considerable doubt as to whether these "Apalaches" were beans or peas. Some writers call them beans.

Pumpkins were immediately taken over by the French and their presence as a crop is frequently noted in the literature, but their degree of importance is not given.\*

The tobacco of the Louisiana Indians was not important as an export crop because of its poor quality. Commercial tobacco seed were introduced from elsewhere and for that reason, tobacco is treated later as a commercial crop.

#### THE PRE-FRENCH INTRODUCTIONS

The introduction of the first animals of European domestication antedates the earliest explorations of the French in the Mississippi Valley. Membre, who was with La Salle<sup>10</sup> on his first journey of exploration, in speaking of the Arkansas said that: "domestic fowls and tame geese were wandering about their rude cabins of bark" and Iberville,<sup>11</sup> in 1699, said that the Bayougoulas, down on the Mississippi River, had fowls for pets which they had obtained from some tribes to the west near the coast. Martin<sup>12</sup> said that these fowls had come from the Attakapas, who had procured them from a vessel which had been cast ashore there. Iberville<sup>13</sup> wrote that he bought eight fowls (volailles, not coq d'Inde) at the village of the Houmas.

Horses also had penetrated into the western part of what is now Louisiana prior to the French explorations, but their source is better known. Tonty,<sup>14</sup> in speaking of the "Caddodaquis" on

\* It is a legend in Louisiana that the CUSHAW was an Indian product. It is a member of the squash family and a prominent food article in common use today.—Ed. La. Hist. Qy.

<sup>9</sup> Du Pratz, *op. cit.*, III, 9.

<sup>10</sup> Francis Parkman, *The Discovery of the Great West*, Boston, 1875, 275.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph Wallace, *The History of Illinois and Louisiana under French Rule*, Cincinnati, 1893, 216.

<sup>12</sup> Francois-Xavier Martin, *History of Louisiana*, New Orleans, 1882, 97.

<sup>13</sup> Journal de la Navigation de Lemoine D'Iberville aux cotes Septentrionales du Golfe du Mexique pour L'Occupation du Mississippi (December, 1698-May, 1699), Pierre Margry, *Decouvertes et Etablissements dans L'Ouest et dans le Sud de L'Amerique Septentrionale*, Paris, 1881, IV, 183.

<sup>14</sup> Weston A. Goodspeed, *The Province and the States*, Madison, 1904, 109.

the Red River said that:<sup>15</sup> "Horses are very common among them. There is not a cabin that has not four or five of them. As this nation is sometimes at peace and sometimes at war with the neighboring Spanish, they take advantage of war to carry off their horses." That was 1690 and the number of horses indicates that the Indians had had them for some time. By 1723 Indian agents carried on trade in horses with the French at Natchez.<sup>16</sup> The Avoyel Indians later became agents from whom the French purchased a cheap and plentiful supply of horses.

Figs and peaches were grown by various tribes on the Mississippi River prior to French settlement. The missionaries, La Source and De Montigny, who descended the Mississippi River in 1698 to establish missions noted that:<sup>17</sup> "The peach trees were in blossom at the Tonica in the month of January. They are so plentiful in the village of the Tensa that they cut them down." Du Pratz<sup>18</sup> wrote that: "The natives had doubtless obtained from the English colony of Carolina the peach and fig trees which they had when the French established themselves in Louisiana." Peach trees became very common in various Indian villages, not because of industry on the part of the Indians, but because the seeds thrown out sprouted and grew.

#### THE EARLY INTRODUCTIONS OF IBERVILLE

La Salle, on his ill-fated expedition which was intended to settle Louisiana, stopped at St. Domingue where:<sup>19</sup> "all kinds of domestic animals were taken on board to stock the new country," but there are no indications that these animals ever affected French colonization in Louisiana. The next expedition, that of Iberville in 1699, which led to the founding of Biloxi and Mobile was of considerable importance because he brought from France:<sup>20</sup> "two of every kind of fruit tree all of which grew, except one vine." From St. Domingue he also brought some cotton which was said to have grown better than that in the islands. It was on this trip that he brought six cows, one bull, six goats, as well as two wild hogs to turn loose in the woods.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>16</sup> Surrey, *op. cit.*, 416.

<sup>17</sup> Swanton, *op. cit.*, 265.

<sup>18</sup> Du Pratz, *op. cit.*, II, 20.

<sup>19</sup> John G. Shea, *The Establishment of the Faith in New France by Father Christian Leclercq* New York, 1881, 209.

<sup>20</sup> Letter of Iberville to the Minister of the Marine, September 7, 1700, Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 376.

On his second voyage, while exploring on the Mississippi River, he gave the Houma Indians, in return for some corn meal, *farines de ble d'Inde*,<sup>21</sup> "a half bushel of wheat and some peas to sow, as well as some orange, apple and cotton seed." On January 18th, 1700,<sup>22</sup> he had some cane planted, but he expressed doubt as to whether it would grow because it was so light and yellow. The cane did not grow, and it seems to have been forgotten until 1751, when the Jesuits received credit for introducing it into Louisiana. On the third voyage Iberville had loaded at St. Domingue:<sup>23</sup> "twenty cows and bulls, three mares and one horse, and several wild hogs to populate the country. I forgot nothing at all that is necessary to make this country independent of France."

He also asked for some cattle and sheep from Vera Cruz, but the shipment was prevented. In 1703 Iberville,<sup>24</sup> in writing to the Minister of the Marine, asked for some Spanish sheep from Bayonne as they had finer wool than those at the Cape. He also asked for a big, strong stallion for Mobile because the horses in America were small, probably meaning those in the West Indies. These statements cover the general introductions of Sieur d'Iberville. The only plants which he definitely named were: cotton, wheat, peas, oranges, the vine, and sugar cane, but as stated previously, there were many others which he did not name. The only animals named were horses, cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. Chickens, though not specifically named, were soon present in large numbers and it may be assumed that he had brought them, although some may have been procured from the Indians.

#### THE ANIMALS

The first census shows that in 1704<sup>25</sup> there were nine oxen, fourteen cows, four bulls, five calves, about 100 pigs and 400 chickens in the colony. There were in 1708<sup>26</sup> fifty milk cows, forty calves, four bulls, eight oxen, 1400 pigs and 2,000 chickens. The horses, sheep and goats were not mentioned, so it appears that they died out or were taken by the Indians, as the censuses endeavor to list all people and animals of the entire colony.

<sup>21</sup> Journal of Iberville on his Second Voyage to the Mississippi, 1699-1700, Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 409.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 399.

<sup>23</sup> Relation du Troisieme Voyage de Iberville, Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 503.

<sup>24</sup> Letter of Iberville to the Minister of the Marine, February 15, 1703, at La Rochelle, Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 626.

<sup>25</sup> Census of Louisiana by Nicolas De La Salle, 1704, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 20.

<sup>26</sup> Census of Louisiana by Nicolas De La Salle, 1708, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 32.



*Horses*—Very few of the horses of Louisiana were brought by the French from either France or St. Domingue. The main source or supply was Spanish territory to the west from whence the Indians of northwestern Louisiana—Caddo, Avoyel, and Natchitoches—got them and sold them to the French. As previously pointed out, the horses introduced into Louisiana from St. Domingue were omitted in the census list of 1708. Even in 1721,<sup>27</sup> the census showed that there were:

... only nine horses in the whole town (of New Orleans)! Not even the Governor of Louisiana could boast a horse... the nine horses were private property. Trudeau had four of them and Pierre and Mathurin Dreux owned the other five. Furthermore, in eleven years from 1721 to 1732 the number of horses increased only from nine to fourteen.

And according to the same authority,<sup>28</sup> in 1731, there was not one horse in the entire German settlement. There were 262 horses outside of New Orleans and the Tonica Indians owned 30 more which they had gotten from the Spanish. Surrey said that: "Fine geldings sold at New Orleans in 1737 for 30 livres each, 250 being brought thither from Natchitoches" and Bienville said that 230 horses were bought in Natchitoches in 1740.<sup>29</sup> Oxen were used chiefly for drawing carts, and horses were for carriages and riding.<sup>31</sup> The first carriage was brought from Havana in 1730, and the first coach in 1733. By 1753 all men of means owned chaises which were drawn by two horses and some had coaches drawn by four horses.

As pointed out by Du Pratz,<sup>32</sup> the Spaniards of New Mexico had more horses than they knew what to do with and Avoyel and other Indians brought them to the French. He said that the French had more horses than they especially needed, meaning at Natchez. It appears that the ancestors of the Louisiana "Creole ponies" of today are descended from horses introduced from the Spanish territory lying to the west. The type, also, bears out the conclusion.

<sup>27</sup> J. Hanno Deiler, *The Settlement of the German Coast of Louisiana*, Philadelphia, 1909, 67.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>29</sup> Surrey, *op. cit.*, 282.

<sup>30</sup> Letter from Bienville, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, I, 428.

<sup>31</sup> Surrey, *op. cit.*, 95.

<sup>32</sup> Du Pratz, *op. cit.*, II, 241-242.

**Cattle.**—There were several places from which the French tried to get cattle for the colony, but due to jealousy on the part of their rivals, few were gotten in the early years, and their cattle increased in numbers very slowly. The first introductions, as mentioned earlier, were from St. Domingue, but cattle were soon brought in small numbers from Vera Cruz and Cuba. In 1710 Cadillac<sup>33</sup> sent a vessel to Vera Cruz to open trade relations and to get a few cattle. The commander of the ship was presented with several head, but he was ordered to leave the port.

By 1713<sup>34</sup> there were approximately three hundred head of cattle—cows, oxen, bulls, and calves—on Dauphine Island and at Fort St. Louis. There had been crop failures for three consecutive years and the cattle had fared better than the pigs and chickens. Duclos made plans to buy cattle from various Spanish ports—Matanzas, Havana, Vera Cruz, and Tampico—and to keep them for stock raising and slaughter as needed. Various attempts were made to get cattle from Cuba, especially Havana, but only with indifferent success. One of the more successful trips was in 1716, when a vessel was sent to Havana<sup>35</sup> with orders to enter the port under pretext of getting supplies and while there, to take on board a cargo of cattle. This was done and 60 head were already on board when the governor of the island was so informed. He immediately had all but 15 head of the cattle taken off, and ordered the vessel to leave the port. It is evident that the French did secure cattle from the various ports, but not in the large numbers which they had hoped.

Some cattle had evidently been bought from the Spaniards in Florida is shown by the following quotation:<sup>36</sup>

At the same time M. Perier was at Mobile he had some conversation with some Spaniards who were there. He asked them if he could get some cattle from the direction of Florida where there are many of them and where formerly M. DeSerigny had obtained some. These Spaniards assured him that we could get some and that the Governor of Florida would not refuse permission to have some gathered as we had rendered them a service in the matter of the war they had against the Talapoosa Indians. We have dispatched Sieur de La Livaudais, an intelligent man for the

<sup>33</sup> Surrey, *op. cit.*, 390.

<sup>34</sup> Letter of Duclos to Pontchartrain, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 80.

<sup>35</sup> Surrey, *op. cit.*, 434.

<sup>36</sup> Letter of Perier and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, November 2, 1727, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 550.

purpose, who had departed with letters of recommendation for that Governor, and we are convinced that he will obtain permission to have some got together. He is taking with him a small quantity of goods to pay the Indians who will get the said cattle together for him and who will drive them to Mobile. He also has a small present for the Governor if he permits it. *We expect that he will be able to get seven to eight hundred of them. If they were once delivered in the colony, it would make good progress and it would oblige those who have large herds to get rid of part of them in order to relieve the other inhabitants.*

This seems to have been an attempt to break the monopoly of the large holders. This letter, as did many others, outlined plans for getting cattle but said little of actual acquisitions.

The securing of cattle from the English of Carolina was even more difficult than getting them from the Spanish for, according to Surrey,<sup>37</sup> in 1717,

The ensign of the Company was sent to Carolina to reclaim some French deserters to make the agreement with the Governor to furnish Louisiana with 2,000 cows. He accomplished neither of the tasks assigned; instead, on his arrival he was seized as an undesirable alien, made a prisoner and sent to England, whence he was allowed to go to France.

In 1740<sup>38</sup> Illinois furnished 77 yoke of oxen and 80 horses for the French to use in a campaign against the Chickasaws, and more than 100 head of cattle were bought at the Natchitoches. So cattle raising had advanced rapidly in Illinois, as cattle were first brought into that area only in 1711.<sup>39</sup> The Jesuits had accumulated a herd of 217 head by 1763, and they were sold at auction for 52,150 livres.

The literature therefore shows that the number of cattle in Louisiana was continually augmented by new introductions from the various Spanish ports during the early decades, and later the source of oxen and cattle was the Illinois and Natchitoches areas.

*Sheep and goats.*—Sheep and goats were never important in Louisiana, although the former were mentioned several times in the different letters,<sup>40</sup> one of which said the Company's sheep

<sup>37</sup> Surrey, *op. cit.*, 446.

<sup>38</sup> Letter from Bienville, New Orleans, 1740, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, I, 428.

<sup>39</sup> Goodspeed, *op. cit.*, I, 117.

<sup>40</sup> De La Chaise to the Council of the Company of the Indies, 1725, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 465.



were sold to Sieur De La Freniere in 1725 at the solicitation of Bienville, the other<sup>41</sup> saying that the Company's sheep were sent to the Natchez in 1728. Any sheep sent to the Natchez area in 1728 probably did not survive the massacre of the following year. Goats, following their first introductions, do not appear to have been mentioned again.

*Pigs.*—The first pigs brought to Louisiana were called "cochons marrons"<sup>42</sup> from St. Domingue. An early note on this variety is by Joutel in his Historical Journal in which he tells of a hunt on the Isle of Pines in 1684: "One of our hunters killed a wild swine, which the inhabitants of these islands called maron. There are some on the Island of St. Domingue or Hispaniola. They are of the breed of those of the Spaniards left in the islands when they first discovered them, and run wild in the woods." Labat said that there were two varieties of "cochon marron" in the West Indies which had been brought by the French from France, and by the Spanish from Cadiz. It was the "cochon marron" that Iberville introduced and which in the nine years had increased in numbers to 1400 as previously stated.

From 1710 to 1718 due to poor corn crops in the colony, the number had decreased greatly but Duclos devised a plan by which he intended to raise more by feeding them corn which he was to buy from the Indians over on the Mississippi River.<sup>43</sup> These pigs which were raised wild or semi-wild state are in all probability, the ancestors to the "razorback" of that part of the country today.

*Chickens.*—Chickens came into prominence early but the 2,000 listed in 1708, decreased in numbers, as did the pigs, during the corn famine. When the Germans<sup>44</sup> settled the "Coast" above New Orleans in 1721: "The Company did not furnish chickens. A pig or two was all! Chickens were furnished only by Bienville, and only to those of Bienville's own land immediately above the city of New Orleans, to raise poultry for the city and to pay part of their ground rent to Monsieur Bienville in capons." Later these people were to become the poultry and vegetable producers for the city. Their trips down the river with boat loads of produce on Friday afternoons in preparation for the Saturday market are mentioned in most Louisiana histories.

<sup>41</sup> Perier and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, 1728, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 605.

<sup>42</sup> French, *op. cit.*, Part I, 91, Jean Baptiste Labat, *Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de l'Amerique*, Paris, 1724, I, 124.

<sup>43</sup> Duclos to Pontchartrain, 1713, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 108.

<sup>44</sup> Deller, *op. cit.*, 59.

**Bees.**—In all the literature on the French colonial period, bees are not mentioned once. According to Hamilton,<sup>45</sup> bees were introduced into West Florida from the Atlantic coast only in 1772. Bartram,<sup>46</sup> a naturalist and a very keen observer, as late as 1791, made the following statement:

There were few or none (meaning bees) west of the Isthmus of Florida and but one hive in Mobile, which was lately brought there from Europe, and English supposing that there were none in the country, not finding any when they took possession of it after the Spanish and French. I had been assured by the traders that there were none in West Florida, which to me seemed extraordinary and almost incredible, since they were so numerous all along the eastern continent from Nova Scotia to East Florida, even in the wild forests, as to be thought by the generality of the inhabitants, aborigines of this continent.

Bees can be successfully kept throughout the lower Mississippi Valley, and their absence for such a long time is indeed quite remarkable.

**Cochineal.**—The cochineal industry became very important in Oaxaca, Mexico, as well as in the Canary Islands. That the French were not lacking in imagination and enterprise is shown by the following quotation:<sup>47</sup>

Valadon wrote to us also on the same subject and tells us to write to him at Campeche by way of Pensacola when some merchandise has arrived. We have asked one of these Spaniards to try to bring us a few cochineal eggs and a memorandum about it. He did not get the eggs because the Indians were not willing to let them leave. He has sent us a letter which explains the manner in which it is gathered, but we must have some eggs. We shall have some cactus plants here in sufficient quantities on which these little worms are gathered.

Perhaps with a start the industry would have been profitable at least for a time, but nothing was said of any actual introduction of cochineal eggs or insects.

**Summary Statement on the Introduction of Livestock.**—Of the stock introduced by Iberville the cattle, pigs, and chickens were necessary and successful introductions, the last two named

<sup>45</sup> Peter Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, Boston, 1897, 230.

<sup>46</sup> William Bartram, *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, and East and West Florida*, Philadelphia, 1791, 411.

<sup>47</sup> Communication of Perler and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, New Orleans, July 31, 1728, *Miss. Prov. Archives*, II, 577.



increasing far more rapidly than the first. Horses were procurable elsewhere and the sheep and goats were never to become important. Nevertheless, the experimentation was necessary before it could be told what stock should be kept.

#### THE PLANTS

The plants cultivated by the French were in some cases to succeed and in others to fail. The successful and the unsuccessful alike are taken up in the following discussion to show the groping and experimentation carried on in search for crops which could be grown with profit in the new colony.

##### *Restrictions placed upon agriculture in Louisiana by France.*

—It was not the purpose of the mother country to allow the colony to compete with her in agricultural production. France gave up a small tobacco production in Guyenne and allowed John Law a monopoly in the tobacco trade, even to the extent of heavily taxing the product of other nations, but she placed restrictions upon the raising of hemp, flax, and wine in Louisiana,<sup>48</sup> although it is probable that no French crops would have been especially productive in Louisiana. Wheat was never successfully grown in Louisiana. So the restriction, during that period, favored one crop at the possible expense of several others, but it was during a later period under American rule that the sugar tariff made an extremely important difference. Under a high protective tariff and with slave labor, the sugar industry flourished from 1830 to 1860, whereas it probably could not have existed without the tariff.

*Myrtle-wax.*—Along with tobacco, myrtle-wax was one of the early export products of Louisiana. The wax<sup>49</sup> was gotten by boiling the berries of the shrub (*Myrica cerifera*), a process discovered by an English carpenter from Biloxi. Gayarre gives the early history of the industry thus:

A fragrant shrub, called the Anmiche by the Indians, had attracted the attention of the government. It was called the wax tree or candle berry tree (*Myrica cerifera*). The candles made of it were, at that time, in general use among the colonists. The French government thought it possible to make use of the wax as an object of trade and required information on the subject, which was given in

<sup>48</sup> Alexander Franz, *Die Kolonization des Mississippitales*, Leipzig, 1906, 117.

<sup>49</sup> Charles Gayarre, *Historical Notes on the Commerce and Agriculture of Louisiana, 1720-1766*, *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, II, 288.

very interesting reports by Bienville, Salmon and the botanist Alexandre and others. It resulted from these investigations that cultivation of this shrub might be productive and that on the average, one pound of wax could be extracted out of eight pounds of berries.

As early as 1724<sup>50</sup> "the Jesuits had improved the front of their land by a plantation of the myrtle-wax shrub." They still had a flourishing and beautiful plantation of myrtle-wax trees in 1743 and wax was an important article of trade. In 1752 the Intendant Commissary<sup>51</sup> wrote that:

The cultivation of the wax tree had succeeded admirably. M. Dubreuil alone, has made 6,000 pounds of wax. Others have obtained handsome results, in proportion to their forces; some went to the sea-shore where the tree grows wild in order to use it in its natural state. It is the only luminary used here by the inhabitants and it is exported to the other parts of America and to France.

Of the half dozen citations on myrtle-wax none stated that the Indians had ever used wax. In case the Indians did not use this tree for obtaining wax, it is possible that the colonists should be credited with the domestication of a new plant indigenous to the New World.

Franz<sup>52</sup> in describing the agricultural conditions in 1756 said that the culture of wax and silk had long since been given up, so the industry was after all quite short-lived.

*Silk.*—At one time silk producing was thought to have as great possibilities in Louisiana as some of the other lines of agricultural production. Various letters to the directors of the Company of the Indies mentioned the favorable climate for growing the mulberry tree and the directors, in return, made extensive plans and resolutions for establishing the industry. As pointed out in the letters, the trees grew easily wherever planted, and the silk worm eggs could be secured.

The following citations describe the conditions under which the plans were made, but also show the optimism which the colonists felt for silk raising. As early as 1709 Mandeville,<sup>53</sup> in a memoir wrote that: "Mulberry trees which are rather tall trees

<sup>50</sup> Martin, *op. cit.*, 156.

<sup>51</sup> Charles Gayarre, *Louisiana: Its History as a French Colony*, N. Y., 1852, II, 65.

<sup>52</sup> Franz, *op. cit.*, 347.

<sup>53</sup> Memoir of Mandeville, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 51.

with fruit black and long are found all along the river, but they are easy to plant and they grow everywhere. Some are planted at the fort which bear fruit every year and demand no care. . . There are no white mulberry trees." Duclos wrote to Pontchartrain, August 25, 1713:<sup>54</sup> "I shall give warning . . . that the company must not count at all on large returns from these for five or six years . . . especially in silk even though the mulberry trees are here in great numbers scattered in all directions in the woods of requisite quality for the feeding of the silkworms and it is not necessary to send other young trees." The same year in a later letter Duclos<sup>55</sup> recommended that the company go to the expense of supporting a man who understands the feeding of silk worms and the manner of preparing silk.

Lamoth Cadillac wrote Pontchartrain in 1723:<sup>56</sup>

There are also many mulberry trees, so that in order to make silk it is only necessary to plant them on the farms, even in the streets and in the roads. In regard to silk worm eggs we must not be troubled about how we shall obtain them because we can get them from the English by way of the river of the Alabamas and even nearer by way of Tampico where the Spanish carry on a rather considerable commerce in them as well as in wool and cotton.

Goodspeed<sup>57</sup> tells of a grant to Paris Du Vernay, who brought over 28 persons in his party. He was given a concession on the site of the old Bayougoula village 28 leagues above New Orleans. He immediately made preparations for rearing silkworms and the manufacture of silk, as well as the raising of many other products.

The Minutes of the Directors of the Company of the Indies, Paris, June 3rd and 4th, 1729<sup>58</sup> give the conditions under which it was expected that the industry would receive the impetus necessary to start it:

On the examination that has been made of the proposals of Sieur Dubuisson, the younger, an inhabitant of Louisiana, for the purpose of succeeding in producing silk in this colony the following resolutions have been adopted:

<sup>54</sup> *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, Jackson, 1929, II, 102.

<sup>55</sup> *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 102.

<sup>56</sup> *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 177.

<sup>57</sup> Goodspeed, *op. cit.*, 162.

<sup>58</sup> Minutes of the Directors of the Company of the Indies, 1729, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 656.



First, to have an ordinance issued by the Council of Louisiana forbidding the destruction of any mulberry trees in the clearing of the lands.

Second, that all the inhabitants to whom negroes are delivered shall be obliged to plant on their land the number of mulberry-trees per head of negroes that shall be fixed by the Council.

Third, that there shall be advanced to Sieur Dubuisson on the conditions established for all the inhabitants three negroes or negresses from each of the first four ships that arrive in Louisiana in order to encourage him to set an example to the inhabitants in the way to raise the worms, to preserve their eggs and to obtain the silk.

Fourth, that of the two women silk-makers whom he requests one will be sent over to him, to whom the Company will give 600 livres per year for wages and food.

Fifth, that the sister of the said Dubuisson shall be invited to return to Louisiana.

Sixth, that the Company shall send at the same time to Louisiana, an equipped spinning wheel to serve as a model, a pound of eggs and some large copper pans.

Seventh, that the silk that is made by the said Dubuisson during the first two years shall be supplied to the Company free of charge and after this time the Company shall fix a reasonable price for that which he furnishes.

The report to the Directors of the Company of the Indies indicated that some changes were planned, which if carried out, should have changed the appearance of the landscape of the colony. To what extent the suggestions and rules were executed, no statement can be made.<sup>59</sup>

As far as we can we are inducing the inhabitants to plant mulberry trees on their lands. We are urging them also to plant some on the drainage ditches that each will have dug on his land and even on the boundaries in the way that you explain, but as the boundaries can not extend far in depth because of the fact that it is necessary to build roads, the inhabitants can be required to plant every year in the line of his boundaries a dozen mulberry trees on each side to the end of the depth of his land, each on his land 18 feet from the other, that is to say that each inhabitant will plant them 9 feet from his line and his neighbor at the same distance. It can be inserted in the provisional order and they can be required to present a certificate in

<sup>59</sup> *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 617, Letter from Perler and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies.



due form (certifying) that they have planted them every year and if they fail to do so, they shall be planted at his cost and expense. We think that would be even better than a decree of the Superior Council.

Dubuisson actually raised some silk worms and produced silk in 1721,<sup>60</sup> but the industry can be listed as a complete failure.

*Tobacco.*—Tobacco was indigenous to the New World and it was extensively grown in the Eastern Maize Area<sup>61</sup> so it would seem that the establishment of tobacco plantations in Louisiana would be an easy matter. Two difficulties arose and put off the commercial production for nearly three decades. They were the problem of selecting the proper varieties of seeds, and technique of curing and packing the product. The plant may as well have been foreign to the area as will be seen from the literature cited.

Various letters printed in the Mississippi Provincial Archives describe with considerable detail the difficulty of curing and packing, as well as the kind that "smelled like hay." As late as 1729, in a letter<sup>62</sup> to the Directors of the Company of the Indies the following request was made: "Mr. De La Chaise asks you for some manufacturers of tobacco which are thoroughly competent. You ought to have sent several here last year. It is in the first years that skillful people are needed to show the way in which they must have the tobacco cured and to cultivate it while it is in the ground." That these "manufacturers of tobacco" should come from France is interesting indeed as pointed out in an editorial note:<sup>63</sup>

The word "manufacturers of tobacco" translated is Clairacs. Clairac is a village in the south of France near Marmande in the department of Lot-et-Garonne. Men from this community seem to have been employed in Louisiana as tobacco experts and so the name of their village came to be used generically to denote the manufacture of tobacco. At Natchez there was a "concession of the Clairacs."

Perier persuaded some Carolina tobacco growers whom he had met at the Cape to come to Louisiana to oversee tobacco culture for the Company, and they promised to send him some seed upon their return to Carolina, but the seed never arrived.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Sidelights on Louisiana History, *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, I, No. 3, 98.

<sup>61</sup> Wissler, *op. cit.*, 13.

<sup>62</sup> Letter of Perier and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, New Orleans, June 22, 1729, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 593.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 593, citing Margry, *op. cit.*, V, 573.

<sup>64</sup> Surrey, *op. cit.*, 448.

The seed of the early tobacco at Natchez was native, but some was evidently from Virginia.<sup>65</sup> Most unusual of all is the fact that tobacco shipped from Louisiana to France had the flavors of the current European raised product:<sup>66</sup>

One of the two had the flavor of Strassburg tobacco with a golden border, and the other retained that of the tobacco of Guyenne. In fact, Mr. Law had sent some families of tobacco growers from these places who had carried some seeds from their countries to plant them. These seeds had preserved almost the same flavor in spite of the difference in climate.

Perier was elated over the fact that Louisiana could raise the various tobaccos. He set out secretly to secure seeds of Virginia tobacco which was then, as later, the most sought-after variety. The story as told by Perier is as follows:

I then wrote to our commissioner at London for the purchase of tobacco materials, to find me an intelligent person who would be willing to embark for Virginia and who could bring me back from there some tobacco seed, informing him also of the names of those that Scott used in his factory (and stating) that the Company had permitted me to offer as much as 6000 livres to the one who would attempt this enterprise with success. In fact Sieur Cavelier selected a very intelligent young Swiss who brought back to us at the hotel of the Company of the Indies of the different kinds of tobacco that are cultivated in Virginia that we make use of in our factories in France as well as those used by Scott in Holland. There were also included in some little packages some (samples of) Virginia soils that produced these different kinds of seeds, in order that by sampling of these different kinds of soils and the chemical analysis that would be made of them we might be able to select the soils in Louisiana most similar in quality to the Virginia soils—This was done and the seeds planted on the farm of the Company united with the general farm—The English persuaded the Indians (Natchez) to destroy the first planting—The farm was then ceded back to the king.

Tobacco improved in quality and according to Collot,<sup>67</sup> Pointe Coupee produced tobacco of the "best quality" and two million pounds were exported annually from that vicinity. It led in both

<sup>65</sup> Du Pratz, *op. cit.*, III, 360.

<sup>66</sup> Memoir on the tobacco to be grown in Louisiana (Natchez), *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 567.

<sup>67</sup> Victor Collot, *A Journey in North America*, Paris, 1828, II, 175.

quality and quantity. The Acadians<sup>68</sup> of St. James, however, originated the famous "Perique tobacco."

The production of tobacco increased until it reached its maximum development at the end of the French regime. At that time it and indigo were the leading crops of the colony. The highest production was in 1760 and 1761 with a total value of 480,000 L. for each year.<sup>69</sup> According to Wailes,<sup>70</sup> the tobacco planters greatly expanded their facilities for producing tobacco during the Spanish period, especially in the buying of slaves on credit. With the flood of tobacco which then was shipped down the Mississippi River from Kentucky, tobacco cultivation on the Mississippi River went into decline to the great embarrassment and injury of the planters who had assumed the heavy obligation.

*Indigo*.—"Indigo" is *indicum*, the Indian dye according to Taylor,<sup>71</sup> and the literature of the colony shows that the seed of the cultivated indigo was introduced from the West Indies, but there is some evidence that a wild form was found in Mississippi. Du Pratz<sup>72</sup> said that the high lands of Louisiana grow a wild variety and Wailes lists *Baptisia tinctoria* in the flora of Mississippi, although the former writer said that the cultivated indigo comes from the islands. The earliest note on the indigo appears to be Duclos' recommendation to Pontchartrain in 1713 in which he said:<sup>73</sup>

It would be well for the company to go to the expense of buying indigo seed with a skillful negro farmer at Santo Domingo and transport him here where he would teach the method of cultivating this plant, and also go to the expense of supporting a man who understands the feeding of silkworms, and the manner of manufacturing silk.

Evidently the recommendation brought no action for in 1723 Bienville made a trip to Santo Domingo which brought the following criticism:<sup>74</sup>

It is proper to speak to you, Gentlemen, of the voyage to the Cape that Messrs. De Bienville, De La Tour and Delorme had made by a brigantine of the Company named L'Abeille, commanded by a man named Vrit for the pur-

<sup>68</sup> Chambers, *Mississippi Valley Beginnings*, New York, 1922, 137.

<sup>69</sup> Franz, *op. cit.*, 347.

<sup>70</sup> L. C. Wailes, *Report on Geology and Agriculture of Mississippi*, Jackson, 1854, 134.

<sup>71</sup> Isaac Taylor, *Words and Places*, London, 1909, 239.

<sup>72</sup> Du Pratz, *op. cit.*, III, 354.

<sup>73</sup> Wailes, *op. cit.*, 347.

<sup>74</sup> Letter of Duclos to Pontchartrain, October 25, 1713, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 101.



pose of getting three quarts of indigo seed and several hogsheads of wine and other delicacies for these gentlemen . . . It cost to (go to) the Cape more than 3,000 livres . . . So, Gentlemen, there are three *quarts* of indigo seed that cost the Company very dearly although it has not paid for them.

The next year the indigo grew well in spite of the high floods which lasted until July.<sup>75</sup> A few tests were made and the indigo produced was "fine and copper-colored," but most of the crop was kept for seed, Bienville being the only exporter. He shipped 60 pounds on the *Galatee*. *Sieur Massy* said that his bastard indigo (*Indigot bastard*) was six feet high and well branched.<sup>76</sup>

The best description of the cultivation and manufacture of indigo is given by *Wailles*<sup>77</sup> for a later period, and especially for Mississippi. The cultivation of the plant was quite similar to that of cotton, but the harvesting was far more disagreeable and was indeed, very unhealthful. Several cuttings per year were made and the product was steeped out in vats which attracted great numbers of flies. The water drained off from the vats killed the fish in streams, and it is not surprising that many of the Mississippi farmers were content to harvest the seed of their crops which they sold to the planters of *Pointe Coupee* and other river settlements for fifty dollars per barrel.

According to *Franz*<sup>78</sup> the export of indigo in 1756 was 270,000 L., in 1760 it was 1,350,000 and by 1762 it had dropped to 410,000 L. He suggested that the probable causes of the sudden increase and drop to export was due to the war temporarily stopping the export from India. He then said that cotton was exported again as the cultivation of tobacco and indigo were destroyed by the Spaniards. *Martin*, however, pictures the decline of the industry for the years just preceding the introduction of the cotton gin and the first manufacture of cane sugar in Louisiana thus:<sup>79</sup>

Indigo had hitherto been the principal object of attention of planters on the banks of the Mississippi; but during several years its success had sadly disappointed their hopes. At first, the failure of the crops had resulted from

<sup>75</sup> Letters of De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, September 6-10, 1723, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 322.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 322.

<sup>77</sup> *Wailles, op. cit.*, 135-137.

<sup>78</sup> *Franz, op. cit.*, 347.

<sup>79</sup> *Martin, op. cit.*, 263.

the vicissitudes of the seasons; of late, an insect attacked the plant and destroyed its leaves. In the years 1793 and 1794, the ravages were so great that almost every plant perished, and the fields presented nothing to the eye but naked stems.

Collot's story of the decline of the indigo industry is as follows:<sup>80</sup>

No indigo was made on any plantation. The low price of indigo of Louisiana in the European markets, especially since India furnishes this article in such large quantities and so rich in quality, does not indemnify the planters of indigo for their expenses and the failure of their harvests. It is on this account that they have entirely abandoned the cultivation of that plant; and in Louisiana I saw the indigo works in ruins, and the planters reduced to growing maize and yams, sawing planks with mills which they had built and framing timber for houses which they send to Havannah and the Islands, preferring the very moderate gain which they reap from this hard labor, to the uncertain and continually decreasing profits to be obtained by the cultivation of indigo.

This apparently marked the end of the cultivation of indigo.

*Rice.*—Rice was an especially fortunate introduction into Louisiana. Its chief requirements are a long, warm growing season and flooding during most of the period of its growth. Its yield is heavy and it makes a cheap and easily prepared food. It was used to a considerable extent and it became a very important export commodity to the West Indies. The earliest mention of rice in the literature of the colony appears to be a statement by D'Artaguettes<sup>81</sup> as follows:

The Indians plant their corn on fields that are inundated by the overflowing waters; these are the only places that are productive. I think that rice will grow there. I have not been able to obtain any except some that is suitable for eating. The inhabitants of Vera Cruz, of Havana, and of the Indies regard this establishment with great jealousy.

This was 13 years after the founding of the colony and yet this important crop had not yet been introduced. Its introduction and cultivation during the very first year would have added considerably to the available food supply, and it would have given an

<sup>80</sup> Collot, *op. cit.*, 166.

<sup>81</sup> *Memoires on Louisiana*, D'Artaguettes to Pontchartrain, May 12, 1712, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 63.

export product as well. Even as late as 1718 a document quoted by Dart<sup>82</sup> showed that: "The Company of the West sent two ships to the Guinea Coast with orders to trade for slaves for Louisiana . . . 'Trade for a few who know how to cultivate rice and also trade for three or four hogsheads of rice suitable for planting.' " Nothing was said about whether the rice was actually brought in or not, but the document showed the importance of having someone who understood rice culture. Probably no one connected with the colony had even seen growing rice. Du Pratz<sup>83</sup> said that rice was introduced from Carolina. La Harpe<sup>84</sup> said that: "On the 11th of September, 1722, a hurricane started which lasted until the 16th . . . The hurricane destroyed 8,000 quarts (130 pounds each) of rice which was on the point of being harvested, without counting the destruction of crops of beans and corn. By 1724<sup>85</sup> colonists were offering rice in payment for slaves which they had bought on credit, and by 1726 it was mentioned<sup>86</sup> along with corn, beans, lumber and other products as exports to the West Indies, and thereafter it always appears as an important crop. Darby,<sup>87</sup> in 1816, placed corn in first place among the crops of Louisiana, but said that rice was competing with it in importance.

*Cotton.*—Although certain varieties of cotton were indigenous to the New World, it is probable that it was not raised by the Indians of the present cotton belt of the United States.<sup>88</sup> Dabney<sup>89</sup> tells of the spread of cotton from India through the Mohammedan World and its introduction into Spain in the 10th century. He mentions its cultivation in Cuba, Mexico, and Peru when they were discovered by Europeans and then, in speaking of our American cotton said the following: "Cotton seeds were brought in from all quarters of the globe, and the American plant, the result of innumerable crossings, remains as to origin, a puzzle to botanists."

Some of the varieties grown in Mississippi and Louisiana as listed by Wailes<sup>90</sup> included Sea Island, the Upland, the Tennessee green seed, the Mexican, Pernambuco, Surinam, Demerara, Egyp-

<sup>82</sup> Henry P. Dart, *The First Cargo of African Slaves for Louisiana, 1718*, *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XIV, 163.

<sup>83</sup> Du Pratz, *op. cit.*, II, 8.

<sup>84</sup> Printed Manuscripts, *Publication of the Louisiana Hist. Soc.*, VIII, 57.

<sup>85</sup> *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 351.

<sup>86</sup> Surrey, *op. cit.*, 372.

<sup>87</sup> Darby, *op. cit.*, 138-144.

<sup>88</sup> Wissler, *op. cit.*, 43.

<sup>89</sup> Charles W. Dabney, *The Cotton Plant*, Washington, 1896, 25, 30.

<sup>90</sup> Wailes, *op. cit.*, 142.



tian, etc. Labat<sup>21</sup> in describing the agriculture of the West Indies said that their cotton was called Siam cotton because the seed was imported from there. The lint, he said, was about that of weak coffee.

The first cotton in Louisiana was planted by Houma Indians from seed given them by Iberville in 1699. In 1712 according to Martin<sup>22</sup> "trifling but successful essays had shown that indigo, tobacco, and cotton could be grown to great advantage; but hands were wanting." Charlevoix wrote that he "saw in the garden of Sieur le Noir, chief clerk, (at Natchez) very fine cotton on the tree," and Du Pratz<sup>23</sup> said that "our species is from Siam—white and fine."

Cotton is mentioned repeatedly as a product of Louisiana, but the output was always limited by the difficulty of separating the lint from the seed. Various cotton gins were constructed but none with success until that of Eli Whitney in the latter part of the century. Claiborne in speaking of the Mississippi farmers of about 1794 said:<sup>24</sup>

They next turned their attention to cotton, the seed having been procured from Georgia and Jamaica. It was a black seed of fine fiber and good shape, and it was the only variety planted in this quarter until 1811, when the Rot appeared . . . (Green seed were then introduced from the Cumberland and this variety was exempt from the disease). The Pitit Gulf was then introduced, supposedly from Mexico, by Dr. Rush Nutt.

During the 19th century the industry grew to tremendous importance, but seeds still continued to be imported. Wailes<sup>25</sup> tells of the difficulty of getting the Mexican variety of seed because of jealousy between two countries, in the following manner:

The Mexican seed is believed to have been first introduced by the later Walter Burling of Natchez . . . when in Mexico City where he was sent by General Wilkinson, in 1806, on a mission connected with the threatened rupture between the two countries, in relation to our western boundary, he dined at the viceroy's table, and in the course of the conversation on the products of the country, he requested permission to import some of the Mexican seed—a

<sup>21</sup> Labat, *op. cit.*, vol. I, part 2, 128.

<sup>22</sup> Martin, *op. cit.*, 113.

<sup>23</sup> Du Pratz, *op. cit.*, III, 364.

<sup>24</sup> Claiborne, J. F. H., *Mississippi as a Province, Territory and State*, Jackson, 1880, 140.

<sup>25</sup> Wailes, *op. cit.*, 143.

request which was not granted, on the ground that it was forbidden by the Spanish government. But the viceroy, over his wine, sportively accorded him permission to take home with him as many *Mexican dolls* as he might fancy—a permission well understood, and which in the same vein was as freely accepted. The stuffing of these dolls is understood to have been cotton seed.

Flint<sup>96</sup> said that Mexican cotton seed was still being imported from Vera Cruz and Tampico in considerable quantities as late as 1832.

*Sugar Cane.*—Sugar cane has been through a long process of diffusion, and one significant step was its introduction into Spain:<sup>97</sup> "In the reign of Abderahman III, who was ruler in Cordova from 912 to 961 A. D. many of the natural products of the East were introduced, and the cotton plant, sugar cane, rice and silk worm were naturalized in Spain." During the last four and a half centuries the sugar industry was closely tied up with the development of plantation agriculture. In 1483, during the Spanish invasion sugar cane was introduced into the Canary Islands where it grew well.<sup>98</sup> The development of the sugar industry necessitated the use of more laborers so slaves were brought in from the Guinea Coast. For a long time this group of islands was an important source of sugar. In 1493, Columbus,<sup>99</sup> on his second voyage carried sugar cane from the Canary Islands to St. Domingo. By 1518,<sup>100</sup> there were 28 sucreries there and this island later became one of the most prosperous agricultural colonies the world has known. From it cane spread to many other islands of the West Indies, to Mexico and to Louisiana.

The establishment of the sugar industry in Louisiana was unbelievably slow. A period of 95 years elapsed between the first introduction of cane and the first successful granulation of sugar. On January 18, 1700, Iberville<sup>101</sup> wrote that he had some cane planted which he had brought over from Santo Domingo, but he expressed doubt as to whether it would grow because it was so

<sup>96</sup> Timothy Flint, *History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley*, Cincinnati, 1832, 240.

<sup>97</sup> Dabney, *op. cit.*, 26 (Citing Shakespeare and Horne, *History of the Mohammedan Empire*, 263.)

<sup>98</sup> Axel Hamberg, *The Canary Islands*, 1929, 397.

<sup>99</sup> C. A. Browne, *Chemistry in Agriculture*, New York, 1926, 136.

<sup>100</sup> William C. Stubbs, *Sugar Cane, a Treatise on the History, Botany, and Agriculture of Sugar Cane*, New Orleans, 1897, 3.

<sup>101</sup> Journal of Iberville's Voyage in 1699 from Cape Francois to the Mississippi Coast and Return, Pierre Margry, *op. cit.*, IV, 399.

light and yellow. The cane evidently did not grow for nothing more was said or done about raising sugar cane in Louisiana until 1751 when:<sup>102</sup>

The king's ships . . . touched at the cape, in the island of Hispaniola, where, with the view of trying with what success the sugar cane could be cultivated on the banks of the Mississippi, the Jesuits of that island were permitted to ship to their brethren in Louisiana a quantity of it. A number of negroes acquainted with the culture and manufacture of sugar, came in the fleet. The canes were planted on the land of the fathers immediately above the city in the lower part of the spot now known as the suburb St. Mary. Before this time the front of the plantation had been improved in the raising of the myrtle wax shrub; the rest was sown with indigo.

Various attempts were made at granulating sugar, but:<sup>103</sup>

Since the year 1766, the manufacture of sugar had been entirely abandoned in Louisiana. A few individuals had, however, contrived to plant a few canes in the neighborhood of the city; they found a vent for them in the market. Two Spaniards, Mendez and Solis, had lately made larger plantations. One of them boiled the juice of the cane into syrup, and the other had set up a distillery, in which he made an indifferent taffia.

It was from these two men that M. Bore secured the cane to plant for his first successful granulation of sugar in 1794. Some of the more important points on the beginning of sugar production are well given by Collot:<sup>104</sup>

It was towards the end of October that I visited M. Bore's plantation. He was then cutting canes which had been planted in February, as at St. Domingo, but closer to each other, at least it appeared so to me, than in the Antilles. I found them still green, the knots at very small distances, and the stalks slender. Notwithstanding this state of unripeness, he was rolling, that is, pressing the canes in the mills. This mill, like those of St. Domingo, is turned by five mules . . . In Louisiana, this paleness (of the syrup) must proceed chiefly from the imperfect ripeness of the cane, which on account of the winter can remain only nine months in the earth whilst in the Antilles . . . the planters never think it ripe but at the end of 13, 14, and 15 months.

<sup>102</sup> Martin, *op. cit.*, 183.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 263.

<sup>104</sup> Collot, *op. cit.*, II, 169-176.



The sugar cane which M. Bore cultivates which is the common cane of the country yields only eight to nine hundred weight of moist sugar per acre; while the same extent of ground in St. Domingo produced twenty-five hundred to three thousand weight.

According to the same authority experiments had been made in St. Domingo on the sugar cane from Batavia. It had been found to yield abundantly but the experiments were interrupted by the revolution. At Guadalupe and Antigua the cane of Otaheite is cultivated, where he said "the superiority of this cane is so well ascertained that no other is cultivated at present; it is also very general in the English colonies, especially in Jamaica and vessels freighted only with this plant have been sent constantly from Antigua to this last named colony within these two years." He suggested that this cane would probably do well in Louisiana, but only scientific experimentation could tell. Evidently some of this variety was introduced into Louisiana for Flint<sup>108</sup> in 1816 wrote that:

There are three or four varieties or species as the African, the Otaheite, the West Indian, and the Ribband cane. The Otaheite grows luxuriantly, and ripens considerably earlier than the West Indian; but is said to contain saccharine matter with the other, only as two to three. The Ribband cane is a new and beautiful species, so called from perpendicular and parallel stripes, that have on the stalk the appearance of ribbands. Its grand advantage is that it can be raised two degrees farther north than the others.

Bunner<sup>109</sup> gave the following figures to show the growth of the industry:

On the strength of the tariff of 1816 fixing the duty at three cents, sugar culture had greatly increased. By 1828 the crop had increased from 15,000 to 18,000 hogsheads. At that time there were no more than 300 plantations . . . with a capital of \$34,000,000, twenty-one thousand men, twelve thousand working cattle and steam engines developing 1650 horsepower.

By 1830, 400 new establishments were formed with \$6,000,000 making 700 establishments. Louisiana already furnished half of the sugar of the country. Planters were the most prosperous class of society.

<sup>108</sup> Flint, *op. cit.*, I, 241.

<sup>109</sup> Bunner, *op. cit.*, 249.

From the above citations, it is obvious that a plant was introduced into an area to which it was not suited. By experimentation with the hardiest varieties of cane, with the use of slave labor, a high protective tariff and the aid of many refugees of the planter class from St. Domingo, a system of agricultural production similar to that developed in that great West Indian island was evolved.

*Potatoes.*—Although the "sweet" and "Irish" potatoes were both indigenous to the New World,<sup>107</sup> they were not cultivated by the Indians of Louisiana prior to French settlement. The sweet potato seems to have been mentioned first in the literature when Dumont listed it as a cultivated crop<sup>108</sup> in the Natchez area and said that it was used for feeding slaves and soldiers. Flint<sup>109</sup> said that "the sweet potato, *convulvulus batatas*, in the sandy soils of the state reaches its utmost perfection. There are different species . . . they are raised in abundance and are the favorite food of the blacks. Irish potatoes are cultivated with greater difficulty . . . they cannot be preserved through the year." Wailes in writing of the cultivation of potatoes in Mississippi listed several varieties of them, among which were the Yam, Bermuda, Spanish, Red, Poplar Root as well as others but no where does he mention the original sources of the sweet potatoes.

*Wheat.*—Although it was planted at various times during the early years of the settlement of Louisiana, wheat was never considered a successful crop. Excessive rains and fogs ruined early crops and later, Flint said, that wheat did not do well because the stalks would lodge before they came to maturity.<sup>110</sup> It is logical that wheat should never have become important in Lower Louisiana in view of the favorable conditions for its production in the Illinois country, and the easy conditions for its transportation down the river to New Orleans.

*Flax and Hemp.*—As flax and hemp were grown in France, their production was restricted or forbidden in Louisiana, an act intended to balance the monopoly allowed Louisiana in tobacco production.<sup>111</sup> In 1779, under the Spanish rule, some Spaniards from Malaga and the Canary Islands came to Louisiana at the expense of the Spanish king. They were sent to a place called

<sup>107</sup> Wissler, *op. cit.*, 15.

<sup>108</sup> Butel-Dumont, George M., *Memoires sur la Louisiane*, Paris, 1753, I, 23.

<sup>109</sup> Flint, *op. cit.*, 238.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>111</sup> Franz, *op. cit.*, 117.

New Iberia in the Teche country, and they were directed to the culture of flax and hemp but without success.<sup>112</sup> That probably marked the end of the attempts at producing flax and hemp.

#### FRUITS

The fruits are difficult to keep track of because of the meager literature on their introductions. As previously stated Iberville introduced two of *all kinds of fruit trees*, all of which grew. Later<sup>113</sup> Perier asked for trees from France as follows:

Send us by the vessels that leave in October all sorts of fruit trees such as russet apples, small red apples, fennel-apples, and others of good quality; peach trees, apricot trees, pear trees of all kinds, cherry trees, red currant trees, raspberry bushes, olive trees, and plum trees of all sorts. Nut trees grow perfectly well here. It is necessary only to root them. The apple tree grows here also equally well.

Whether the above order was carried out, the literature does not seem to state, but Du Pratz<sup>114</sup> said that prunes, mulberries, oranges, lemons, apples, pears, cherries and other fruits were raised. It appears that many varieties of trees were introduced at a very early time, some being from France and some from St. Domingue. The olive is associated with people from Provence who thought that they could make as good oil as was produced in France. Collot<sup>115</sup> mentions pomegranates, lemons, oranges, and olives. Flint<sup>116</sup> at a much later date wrote that a great number of rich and valuable products had been undertaken and mentions various fruits, as does Darby<sup>117</sup> in about the same period.

Of all the fruits grown in Louisiana, the fig, peach, and orange have received the greatest mention. The first two were Pre-French introductions into the Natchez area, but the fig was also introduced before 1730 from Provence.<sup>118</sup> Darby said that "Purple figs do not grow above latitude 30° north, and they are often killed by frost below that latitude. The yellow fig is from south France and grows as far as 33° north. Except for the peach, it is the most common of the fruits; it is all over the state

<sup>112</sup> Martin, *op. cit.*, 226.

<sup>113</sup> Letter of Perier and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, November 2, 1727, *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, II, 557.

<sup>114</sup> Du Pratz, *op. cit.*, II, 16.

<sup>115</sup> Collot, *op. cit.*, II, 175.

<sup>116</sup> Flint, *op. cit.*, 239.

<sup>117</sup> Darby, *op. cit.*, 148-153.

<sup>118</sup> Martin, *op. cit.*, 157.



where there are white settlements." The orange he said was everywhere below 30° north latitude. He went on to say that nearly all plants had come from Europe by way of the West Indies. Had they come directly from France, they would have been hardier. The orange and sugar cane, he said, were about equally hardy.

In the case of the orange, an interesting experimentation went on over a period of nearly two hundred years. Throughout the history of Louisiana, every decade or so, a cold spell has killed the orange trees. The reference of Flint<sup>119</sup> in that respect is typical: "Previous to 1822 oranges were lying under the trees as the apples in the north. A severe frost destroyed the trees that year quite to the ground. The roots have thrown out new trees which are again in a bearing state." It was the cold spells which set the limit of the orange rather than the average temperature.

Louisiana has never been a great fruit producing region. The fruits such as the apple which requires a cold winter do not do well, nor do the tropical fruits which cannot stand frost. With greater perseverance on the part of the inhabitants, more varieties would have been established.

#### GENERAL SUMMARY

A review of a list of plants cultivated in Louisiana would show that such studies as this can more nearly approximate perfection during the extreme youth of the colony. Introductions have been so numerous that the record of many of them has long since been lost; as this region, like many others, has become a "catch-all" for plants. The same, to some extent, is true with regard to animals.

The choice of many introductions is, of course, difficult to evaluate. The time of introduction, for some plants and animals, was much later than it should have been. Cultural influences caused some delay, as in the case of horses. They played a very minor role in the first twenty years of Louisiana history, as they did in several of the French colonies, especially Nova Scotia. Rice might well have come in twenty years earlier. Wheat and silk raising should never have been attempted. Other introductions are debatable as to value, sugar cane being the foremost example. Other crops flourished for a time and later declined, the chief among these being myrtle-wax, indigo, and tobacco.

<sup>119</sup> Flint, *op. cit.*, 239.

Louisiana experienced many difficulties in getting and establishing her domestic plants and animals. Some of these difficulties permit classification:

1. The climate was intermediate between that of France and St. Domingo having wetter summers than those of France and colder winters than those of St. Domingo. The excessively wet summers prevented the profitable raising of such crops as wheat, and the occasional freezes limited the distribution of tropical fruits and crops. At the same time, lack of sufficiently cold winters handicapped such fruits as apples. These peculiarities of climate could be discovered only by experimentation.

2. Lack of knowledge and technical skill long delayed the profitable use of certain crops and caused the failure of others. Such skills and techniques introduced by special importations of experts and workers from France, as silk workers from Provence and tobacco manufacturers from Guyenne, or slaves from St. Domingue who knew how to cultivate sugar cane and manufacture syrup, became phases of the cultural complex.

3. Also, there was the outstanding drawback of the restrictions placed on the export of stock and seed from the English and Spanish colonies, especially the latter. These restrictions, however unreasonable they may seem, were about the equivalent of the French trade restrictions.

The introduction of domestic plants and animals into Louisiana and the conditions under which they were brought in are far more complex than was expected at the beginning of the study. Many more species and varieties were brought into the area than one would ordinarily suspect. The literature on that phase of culture history, likewise, is very great. The material is in letters, memoirs, and other documents. But still there are many deficiencies. Certain plants and animals were ordered but whether or not they were delivered and established in the new habitat may never have been recorded. Sometimes general statements mentioned introductions but failed to name the different species. More frequently, the presence of certain plants is noted at later periods without information as to the source or the time of introduction. Certainly, in this phase of history, the necessity for use of the source material manifests itself, and fortunately the old chroniclers on many occasions wrote with great detail.

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283

A LAWSUIT OVER THE RIGHT TO SELL THE OFFICE OF  
NOTARY IN LOUISIANA DURING THE  
FRENCH REGIME (1769)

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Petition of Ignace Francois Broutin to the Superior Council in  
May, 1769, to annul a Contract Made by Him With  
Augustin Chantalou for the Purchase of the  
Notarial Records of Louisiana

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*Transcription of the Original Document in the Archives of the  
Superior Council at the Cabildo, New Orleans, by the  
Late Heloise H. Cruzat, Translated by  
Sally Dart, New Orleans*

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I

INTRODUCTION BY HENRY P. DART

IT WILL be noted that this lawsuit was begun in May, 1769, six years after the Colony had been transferred to Spain and four months before O'Reilly took possession. Our records show that during this entire interregnum (1763-9) the Superior Council of the French Regime continued to function.

In the first period of colonization (1699-1712) Louisiana was primarily a military outpost with headquarters on the Gulf Coast. Until the death of Iberville (1706) he had supervision of the colony under the control and direction of the Minister of Marine in France. The local administration was first under the control of his lieutenant Sauvolle from 1699 until the latter's death in 1701 when he was succeeded by Bienville. All of these men (Iberville, Sauvolle, Bienville) were in the naval and military service of France, but with Bienville there seems to have been associated for the first time a civil officer, Nicholas La Salle, called a Commissaire. History has not definitely settled the respective duties and powers of these two officials and it is a fact that they were in constant discussion and dispute over the subject, a controversy that ended only with the death of La Salle in 1710. During the whole period (1699-1712) we have found nothing to indicate there was any officer in Louisiana commissioned as Clerk or Notary to the government. It is possible that occasion arose

requiring the execution of writings or documents and in the absence of evidence to the contrary, we may assume that this service or duty was performed by the Commander prior to Bienville's accession and after that by the Commander and the Commissary acting together or separately.

In 1712, a system of Civil Government for Louisiana was created in connection with the transfer of the colony to Crozat. The Superior Council was one of the departments of this system, with a clerk (*greffier*) who *ex-officio* exercised the notarial function and later on the title of Royal Notary was formally conferred upon that officer. The subsequent transfer of the colony to the Company of the West (later named the Company of the Indies) did not make any change in the notarial functions of the clerk (*greffier*) and the same course was followed after the retirement of the Company (1731) and during the whole period of French rule. The rights, powers and duties of Notaries in France were well established long before the colonization of Louisiana and no special legislation seems to have been enacted for Louisiana. In consequence we may conclude that the rules applicable in France governed in Louisiana, but a general law of 1717 required all colonial notaries to bind their records into volumes and to preserve them during their lives and deliver the same to the Clerk of the Superior Council when their authority ended by death or otherwise (See translation of this law in *La. Hist. Qy.*, Vol. 10, p. 82, et seq., January, 1927).

The first clerk of the Superior Council (1712) was Jean Baptiste Raguet, and it was he who received the commission as Royal Notary, and as we have indicated, was the first Notary in Louisiana. His successors at various intervals were Michel Rossard, Nicholas Henry, Augustin Chantalou, Ignace Broutin and Jean Baptiste Garic. The latter was in service at the date of O'Reilly's arrival (1769) and in the distribution of offices under that regime he purchased that of *Escribano* (Clerk) and Notary of the *Cabildo*, and continued in service for many years under the Spanish Regime. The *Cabildo* was the Spanish form of local government established for New Orleans, with certain limited judicial functions. An important ordinance was promulgated by Governor Unzaga on November 9, 1770, requiring all sales, exchanges or alienations of slaves, plantations and real property to be passed before a Notary Public under penalties for non-compliance. The ordinance also required such acts to be accompanied by a Certifi-



cate from the Recorder of Mortgages, the first mention of that subject in our records. (A translation of this law will be found in *La. Hist. Qy.*, Vol. 2, p. 448, October, 1919.)

The document translated and printed herewith presents an interesting episode in Louisiana in 1769 under the French regime, and also furnishes data of historical value regarding the appointment of the colonial Notary, the practice of the profession and the emoluments of the office. It is a petition addressed to the Superior Council in May, 1767, by Ignace Francois Broutin, seeking the annulment of a contract made by him with Augustin Chantalou for the sale of the minutes (records) of the office of Notary held by Chantalou and of the similar records of Henry and Rossard, the latter's predecessors in office.

Both parties to this lawsuit were men of high standing in Louisiana, and apparently dealt with each other in good faith. The price of the sale was 10,000 livres in the current money of France, secured by the bond of the purchaser, payable when the office was duly transferred by the Council to Broutin. Broutin's petition recites the history of the transaction and makes reference to the laws of France governing the appointment to, and tenure of, the office. Plaintiff's right to recover would seem to have been based on the errors of law and fact that induced the making of the contract. Service of the petition was waived by Chantalou, but our records do not show the decision of the court.

The lawsuit grew out of the fact that in May, 1769, Jean Baptiste Garic arrived from France bearing the King's commission as Clerk of the Council and Notary for Louisiana to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Nicholas Henry. The Superior Council seated Garic, which action ousted Broutin who had been serving for eleven months. The effect of this appointment was also to annul any rights previously enjoyed by Chantalou who it seems had been serving under the election or appointment of the Council after Henry's death.

From Broutin's allegations, it is evident that no power dwelt in the Council to make the Chantalou appointment and that the only effect of the same was to create the office of acting Notary, waiting on the pleasure of the King with whom rested solely the appointment of all officers in Louisiana.

HENRY P. DART.

## II

## THE PETITION OF BROUTIN AGAINST CHANTALOU

FILED MAY 17, 1769

Our Lords of the Superior Council of the  
Province of Louisiana.

Our Lords:

The arrival in this colony of *Sieur* Garic, whom you have just admitted as Notary and Clerk of the Council, upsets the plans I had made respecting your choice of me to replace Mr. Chantalou in both these offices. I have the honor to submit to you my representations, Our Lords, hoping for absolute justice, knowing that I cannot refuse to deliver to the said Garic all the minutes of the notaries *Sieur* Rossard and Henry.

My said *Sieur* Chantalou, intending to resign his offices, transacted with me for the future proceeds of the minutes and we agreed on 10,000 livres, which I intended paying in colonial notes, and when you had approved of me, (so) that he might begin to deliver the minutes to me; he exacted my bond for 10,000 livres in the current money of France, without realizing that for the same sum, I could have in France the practice of a notarial firm renowned for at least two hundred years. I consented to it very thoughtlessly. I confess, our Lords, I bought it *ad valorem*<sup>1</sup> (thinking) if he had the right to sell the same, he could even demand payment for these two employments. Moreover, admitting Mr. Chantalou to be a man of principle and learning, upheld by honesty which would not permit him to overcharge for a thing which he did not even have the right to transfer to any one, I relied solely on his honesty and conscience.

Observe, I pray you, that far from making a gain during the eleven months I have officiated as Clerk and Notary, I have lost considerably. Everyone knows that I have made nothing from the sales of the English prizes which was the only chance I would have had to make a profit; that in the other public auctions I have held, soldiers, travelers, sailors and strangers have taken more than my income; and at present there is still due me 27,000 livres from many honest people whom kindness has prevented me from suing, but whom I intend to sue at the first opportunity.

<sup>1</sup> According to the value.

<sup>2</sup> Clerk and Notary.

Observe, moreover, that my said *Sieur Chantalou* was not really clerk of the Council nor Notary, he was only acting as such, just as I, and was simply Clerk while awaiting the court's choice; which would have been made sooner but for the critical circumstances of the war. Knowing this, could he sell the minutes when at any moment he would be forced to surrender them to the clerk chosen by the court, who far from buying them would have compelled him by force to surrender them as is ordered by decree of the Parliament of Paris, June 27, 1716<sup>3</sup> published in the book of "*Nouveau Parfait Notaire*," folio 712.<sup>4</sup>

When I gave my note to my *Sieur Chantalou*, I expected him to surrender his minutes in good shape with an inventory made in the presence of the Judge and the Procureur General of the King. On the contrary, the inventory is incomplete and is not even signed and many of the minutes are in the same condition. It is then certain that my *Sieur Chantalou* sold me that which was not at his disposal. Moreover, the sale ought to have been made only after the inventory was closed, and should have taken place only with the minutes up to date. However, all these formalities are lacking, the inventory was not closed nor the minutes up to date and if the sale of notarial practices is tolerated in Europe it is solely on condition that the sale be made to the advantage of the person chosen by the King. I am not that person, and he is only acting clerk, then since *Sieur Garic* is appointed by the Court the sale is null.

I am not unaware, our Lords, that the minutes of the notaries are their property, that even their heirs have established a right to them, in virtue of the same decree of June 27, 1716, which I have just cited. But I am not the one to be accountable to *Sieur Chantalou*, it is *Sieur Garic* who, entering into office, will have the inventory closed, and I will be out of office; nevertheless it is Mr. Chantalou who must answer for his minutes, since he could only be released by my signature at the end of the inventory, which releasing him would put me in charge.

This decree of 1716 compels the notaries in office to be accountable to their predecessors or heirs for two-thirds of the emoluments from the copies of their minutes for ten years. Such

<sup>3</sup> We have not been able to find a copy of this edict but one of similar import dated August 2, 1717, was translated by W. K. Dart and will be found in *La. Hist. Qy.*, Vol. 10, pp. 82-5 (January, 1927). Ed. *La. Hist. Qy.*

<sup>4</sup> As to the book, see Dart, *The Law Library of a Louisiana Lawyer in the 18th Century* *La. Bar Assn. Reports*, Vol. 25, p. 12, (1924).



is Mr. Chantalou's right, which he can only exact of Sieur Garic who is in charge. Grant me Our Lords, a last representation. In Mr. Chantalou's receipt hereunto annexed he acknowledges having sold his notarial profession, etc. for the sum of 10,000 livres in current money of France which he acknowledges having received in cash. May it please you to observe that he has received this sum in the form of a note which I gave him and that I have made no other contract with him.

Wherefore, all things considered, Our Lords, may it please you to declare null and void the sale of the notarial profession made to me by Sieur Chantalou; notice that my Sieur Chantalou was only a clerk acting as notary, this nomination depending upon the King, and that he ought not to have been regarded as owner of the minutes of the deceased Sieur Rossard and Henry, but only as custodian. Besides, it is not the purpose of the court that throughout America there should be venality in the office. There have been no examples of it in Saint Domingo or in Martinique, etc. By what right would Sieur Chantalou make the innovation. Consider also the defective inventory, the irregularity in the minutes and the obligation I am under to deliver them to Sieur Garic, appointed by the court, ————— therefore order the annulment of the said agreement, the return of my note for 10,000 livres payable to him six months after peace, on July 1st, 1762, which he has in his hands and which emanates only from the said sale and that he will be compelled by Justice in case of refusal, and justice will be done.

In New Orleans, May 17, 1763.

Broutin.

Let Sieur Chantalou be cited to appear at the next session of the Court.

Issued in the Council Chamber, May 17, 1763. (Signed)

Kerlerec. Foucault. Fremeur. Chantillon. le  
Chv. Delahoussaye. Huchet de Kernion. Dela-  
lande. Machault.

Held to be served this day, May 22, 1763.

(Signed) Chantalou.

NOTES ON THE PERSONS INVOLVED IN THIS LAW SUIT

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*Notes on Ignace Francois Broutin*

*By Heloise H. Cruzat*

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**Parentage:** Ignace Francois Broutin was the son of Pierre Broutin and Michelle Lemaree of La Bassee, Bishopric of Arras. Arras is in the Department of Calais and is the capital of Artois. Arras is noted as the birthplace of Robespierre and three important treaties were signed there.

**Arrival in Louisiana:** Ignace F. Broutin arrived in Louisiana in September, 1720.

**Marriage:** In 1729 Ignace Francois Broutin was married to Marie Madelaine Lemaire, daughter of Pierre Lemaire and Marguerite Lamothe, both of Paris. She was born in Paris, parish of St. Suplice. She was the widow by first marriage of Francois Philippe de Hautmenisl de Marigny, Ecuyer Sieur de Mandeville, who died in New Orleans on the 24th of October, 1728. Of this first marriage she had one son, Antoine Philippe de Hautmenisl de Marigny, who in later years sued his stepfather not only for returns of his father's estate but for his share of the community property between the widow Marigny and Broutin, under plea that the first community had never been dissolved. He won his suit twice before the Superior Council and it seems to have ended by a compromise proposed by Broutin, who averred that he was anxious to keep up amicable relations in the family.

Broutin by his second marriage to Madelaine Lemaire had four daughters and one son (so says tradition, but in the archives I find but three daughters and the Cathedral baptismal records that might prove it are missing).

Through his daughters Broutin was the grandfather of Ignace de Lino de Chalmette, the great grandfather of Celestin de Pontalba who married Micaela Almonester, and the grandfather of Louise de Laronde who married Don Andres Almonester.

Madelaine Margueritte Broutin, his eldest daughter, married Louis Xavier Martin, Sieur de Lino de Chalmette. From this marriage there was one son, born a month after his father's death. Louis X. de Lino died in 1755 and in 1756 his widow married Pierre Denis de Laronde. From this second marriage there were several children.

Ignace Francois Broutin's second daughter Marie Madeleine Broutin married Paul Rasteau, son of the famous Rasteau, the merchant-prince of La Rochelle. There was no issue

from this marriage, as he was drowned shortly afterwards. The widow married Jean Jacques Joseph Delfau de Pontalba and from this marriage was born Joseph Xavier Delfau de Pontalba, who had one son, Celestin de Pontalba who married Micaela Almonester.

*Activities of Ignace Francois Broutin:* Ignace Francois Broutin, Engineer, Capt. of Infantry in 1720, established the trading post of Little Desert.

1722-23 purchased for the Company of the West the Concession of Terre Blanche (White Earth) and administered it.

1724 was commandant at the Natchez.

1724 surveyed the flooded lands of the Ceard Plantation (See La. Hist. Qy., Vol. 5, April, 1922, pp. 155-186).

1725 drew map of New Orleans and set down the names of all the residents and the localities of their residences.

1727 made plans for arsenal and hospital of New Orleans.

1732 made plan for Fort Maurepas on site of Fort Rosalie.

1732 plan of powder magazine of New Orleans and estimation.

1732 plan of barracks of New Orleans.

1733 plans for Ursuline Convent on Conde Street.

1733 plan for building where wine and provisions were kept for hospital.

1740 made report on War Council which decided to negotiate with the Chicachas.

1762 bought from Chantalou the minutes of the Superior Council in order to succeed Chantalou as chief clerk, but afterwards demanded annulment of his note for 10,000L when Garic was appointed.

In 1815 Narcisse Broutin, one of his descendants was a notary of New Orleans. There are now under different names hundreds of descendants of Ignace Francois Broutin in Europe and in Louisiana.

#### *Notes on Augustin Chantalou*

*By Editor of Quarterly*

I have not been able to make a careful search through the unprinted records of the Superior Council, but from those which are in print, I find that Chantalou's name appears for the first time in 1739.

During the succeeding years down to 1745, he served as "huissier" (sheriff) of the Council, and as Clerk in the office of Notary Henry. His signature as a witness appears in almost all the notarial acts of that period.



I am not able to add anything of his personal history during the intervening period, nor during the years subsequent to the lawsuit.

H. P. D.



# A HISTORY OF CONCORDIA PARISH, LOUISIANA

By ROBERT DABNEY CALHOUN  
VIDALIA, LA.

Dedicated to the memory of my father, Judge Nathan Meredith Calhoun

## EIGHTH INSTALLMENT (Continued from July, 1933, Quarterly)

### CHAPTER XIX

#### OFFICERS

WE have heretofore written about many of our officers. We shall not repeat, but others deserving some consideration have not been mentioned. We will first give tabulations of our Sheriffs and Clerks, District Attorneys and District Judges.

#### A COMPLETE LIST OF SHERIFFS OF CONCORDIA

Charles Morgan .....	Bond dated Oct. 10, 1805
James Huston .....	Oath dated July 8, 1806
James Dunlap .....	1811
William Willis .....	1812
Benjamin Reagan .....	Bond dated July 24, 1815
Stephen C. Miller .....	Bond dated May 18, 1818
W. S. Parker .....	Bond dated May 31, 1819
Walter Byrnes .....	Bond dated Aug. 18, 1824
Francis S. Girault .....	Oath dated May 1, 1833
Edward Sparrow .....	Oath dated Feb. 12, 1834
Alexander C. Hunter .....	Commission dated May 25, 1840
Isaac J. Course .....	Commission dated Jan. 29, 1845
W. R. C. Vernon .....	Commission dated Dec. 26, 1855
John Janney .....	Commission dated March 7, 1859
John Janney, App. by Gov. Wells .....	Oct. 2, 1865
Albert B. Harris .....	Bond dated June 23, 1868
James Franklin, (negro) .....	1872
Oren Stewart, (negro) .....	Bond dated Jan. 7, 1873
Wade H. Hough, Jr. ....	1874
John Young, (negro) .....	Bond dated Dec. 12, 1876
James Randall, (negro) .....	Bond dated Dec. 13, 1878
P. Wingate Chase .....	Bond dated May 30, 1880
Thomas K. Green, (App. to vacancy) .....	Aug. 4, 1886

Andrew W. Metcalfe .....Bond dated May 21, 1888  
 Thomas K. Green .....Bond dated July 20, 1894  
 J. Harry Lambdin, (App. to vacancy) .....Aug. 26, 1895  
 Albert H. Gillespie .....Bond dated June 18, 1896  
 Eugene P. Campbell, Incumbent, since .....June 6, 1908

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## A COMPLETE LIST OF DISTRICT COURT CLERKS SINCE 1859

William R. Purvis .....Bond dated Nov. 21, 1859  
 John Young Snyder .....Bond dated Dec. 12, 1860  
 Robert L. Rivers, (App. by Gov. Wells) .....Oct. 3, 1865  
 Joseph D. Miller .....Bond dated Jan. 24, 1867  
 James S. Meng .....Bond dated Jan. 6, 1868  
 T. P. Jackson, (negro) .....Bond dated Jan. 4, 1873  
 E. W. Wall, (negro) .....Bond dated Dec. 12, 1876  
 J. P. Ball, (negro) .....Bond dated Feb. 3, 1880  
 Mike A. Joyce .....Bond dated May 30, 1884  
 Wilmer H. Shields .....Bond dated Jan. 29, 1899  
 Albert H. Gillespie .....Bond dated May 28, 1892  
 Charles C. Campbell .....Bond dated Jan. 7, 1896  
 Charles C. Campbell, Jr. ....Bond dated Aug. 16, 1923  
 Victor P. Campbell .....Incumbent

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## A COMPLETE LIST OF DISTRICT ATTORNEYS SINCE 1866

William J. D. Duncan...Nov. Term, 1866 to Oct. Term, 1870  
 J. Edwards Levnan.....April Term, 1871  
 Hiram R. Steele.....Jan. Term, 1872 to April Term, 1873  
 Oren Mayo, Act'g *Pro Tem.*..Oct. Term, 1873 to Dec.  
     Term, 1876.  
 T. Austin .....Dec. Term, 1876  
 Hiram R. Steele.....April Term, 1877 to Oct. Term, 1881  
 Thomas P. Clinton .....Oct. Term, 1881 to June Term, 1883  
 J. N. Luce .....Oct. Term, 1883 to Dec. Term, 1884  
 Hugh Tullis .....April Term, 1885 to April Term, 1888  
 Charles S. Duke.....Oct. Term, 1888 to Oct. Term, 1891  
 David N. Thompson...Nov. Term, 1892 to April Term, 1900  
 Hugh Tullis .....April Term, 1900 to Oct. Term, 1908  
 Abner E. Green .....Oct. Term, 1908 to Feb. 22, 1915  
 Joseph M. Reeves ....March Term, 1915 to Dec. Term, 1930  
 John Dale, Jr. ....Incumbent

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## A COMPLETE LIST OF DISTRICT JUDGES SINCE 1813

James Dunlap .....Nov. Term, 1813 to Nov. Term, 1823  
 John H. Overton .....Nov. Term, 1823 to April Term, 1832  
 Robert N. Ogden.....Oct. Term, 1832 to Dec. Term, 1834  
 Ben Winchester .....June Term, 1835



Robert N. Ogden	Dec. Term, 1835
Thomas C. Nicholls	June Term, 1836 to June Term, 1837
Thomas Cooley	Dec. Term, 1837
Frederick H. Davis	June Term, 1838 to Feb. Term, 1840
Barnabas G. Tenney	Dec. Term, 1840 to July Term, 1841
Thomas Curry	Dec. Term, 1842 to May Term, 1846
Frederick H. Farrar	Nov. Term, 1846 to May Term, 1853
Thomas J. Cooley	Nov. Term, 1853 to Nov. Term, 1856
A. D. M. Haralson	May Term, 1857
Cyrus Ratliff	Nov. Term, 1857 to April Term, 1859
John McVea	Nov. Term, 1859 to Nov. Term, 1860
Edgar D. Farrar	Nov. Term, 1861 to Nov. Term, 1868
Wade H. Hough	Nov. Term, 1868 to April Term, 1884
S. Charles Young	April Term, 1884 to May Term, 1892
Charles S. Duke	May Term, 1892 to ..... 1892
John Leadly Dagg	Oct. Term, 1892 to Dec. Term, 1904
John Stirling Boatner	Dec. Term, 1904 to ..... 1912
John Dale, (Resigned)	April Term, 1912 to March Term, 1914
Nathan M. Calhoun	March Term, 1914 to Jan. Term, 1925
*Robert Monroe Taliaferro	Incumbent

During the period covered by this tabulation, this judicial district was changed several times, both as to the number of the district and the parishes composing it. In the early days Concordia was in the Fourth District, covering a large area including Rapides and Avoyelles. Later on our district became the Sixth, then the Tenth, and it is now the Seventh. Since the Civil War the district has at various times been composed of the Parishes of Tensas and Concordia, and at other times, as it is now, of Concordia and Catahoula.

The minute book covering the period just before and after the Civil War shows that the Court, Judge Edgar D. Farrar presiding, adjourned *sine die* on November 26, 1861; and the next sitting of the Court, Judge Farrar presiding, was on November 20, 1865.

Many men of distinction and of state-wide reputation have served as our District Attorneys or graced our District Bench.

Hiram R. Steele, a native of New York, a captain in the Union Army, was mustered out at Natchez and located in Tensas Parish, where he read law. He was elected Parish Judge of Tensas, and then District Attorney. Mr. Steele removed to New Orleans for a time and was elected or appointed a Judge of the Superior Crimi-

\* Judge Taliaferro promoted to Court of Appeals Bench. Our District Judge now is Judge R. R. Reeves, of Catahoula.

nal Court. He served as Attorney General of the State in 1876. Returning to Tensas, he was again elected District Attorney and represented that Parish in the Constitutional Convention of 1879. Mr. Steele then moved to Vidalia, where he associated himself in a law partnership with J. L. Dagg, maintaining his offices at Saint Joseph in association with Henry A. Garrett. Judge Steele often said that he had an ideal association, that Dagg was a great thinker but no worker while Garrett was a great worker but no thinker. He returned to New York in the early 90's, and was elected District Attorney of King's County, and at the time of his death, in 1929, was an executive of the New York Life Insurance Company. Judge Hugh Tullis, who was intimately acquainted with him, says that he was a man of polished manners and attractive personality; that he possessed great legal ability and was a forceful orator and an entertaining story-teller.

Judge Oren Mayo took a leading part in Parish affairs during the Reconstruction period. After serving as District Attorney, in the early 80's he was elected or appointed as one of the two Judges of the Court of Appeals, his associate on that Bench being the late Judge A. A. Gunby, of Monroe. Judge Mayo died July 2, 1883. He had three daughters: Acena, who was the first wife of Leonard F. Mason; Frances R., who married Charles J. Boatner; and Debora Jane, who was the first wife of Judge John S. Boatner.

J. N. Luce, another District Attorney, moved to New Orleans, where he attained a high standing in the profession. As a young lawyer, he served his apprenticeship at the Harrisonburg bar. It is said of him that in his younger days he was very religious; and that he walked from Harrisonburg to Trinity—some ten or twelve miles—every Sunday morning to teach a Sunday School class. Mr. Luce, in those days, was large and gawky, and it is said that his linen trousers generally terminated about half way between the knee and the ankle.

In our list of District Attorneys we also find the name of Judge David N. Thompson, a native of Catahoula, who subsequently went to the District Bench and the Court of Appeals Bench, and thereafter to the Supreme Court, from which he recently retired after many years of splendid service.

The late Abner E. Green of Tensas, a good lawyer and a most lovable character, was descended from an old Adams County family, his great-great grandfather, Abner Green, having been appointed Treasurer-General of Mississippi Territory by Gover-

nor Claiborne prior to April, 1802; and also holding an appointment from the Governor of Georgia as Register of Probates of the famous "County of Bourbon."<sup>334</sup>

Turning to the District Judges, we find one of the pioneers to have been John H. Overton, ancestor of the well-known attorney and Congressman;\* and there is also Thomas C. Nicholls, one of the early American settlers in the Attakapas, and father of Governor Francis T. Nicholls.

On May 10, 1910, the Concordia Bar adopted resolutions of respect to the memory of John Leadly Dagg, lawyer and jurist; leader in the Anti-Lottery fight and a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1898. Judge Dagg was nominated for Judge of the Court of Appeals, Second Circuit, Third District, under proposed Constitutional amendment of 1904; but the amendment creating the Court failed to carry at the election which was thereafter held simultaneously with the election to confirm the nomination. Judge Dagg, a native of Kentucky, located in Louisiana at the solicitation of his close friend and class-mate J. N. Luce. His father was a Baptist minister and educator. His grandfather, James H. Horsley, was an officer in Nelson's fleet at the battle of Trafalgar, and it is said was wounded by the shot which killed Admiral Nelson. He settled near Quebec, where he received a land grant from the English crown for his naval service. Judge Dagg was never married. He was a man of large stature and would attract attention in any crowd. His manner was dignified and reserved, both on the Bench and in his social contacts.

On December 3, 1912, the Concordia Bar adopted resolutions of respect to the memory of Judge Charles S. Young, of Tensas, lawyer and jurist and father of Benjamin F. Young of Saint Joseph.

June 3, 1912, the local Bar Association paid its tribute to the memory of Judge John Stirling Boatner, lawyer, jurist and member of the Constitutional Convention of 1898. Judge Boatner was descended from an old East Feliciana Parish family, his grandfather, Elias Boatner, having been one of the first settlers. Judge Boatner was the son of Mark and Sarah (Stirling) Boatner and brother of Congressman C. J. Boatner. He practiced law at Harrisonburg and Monroe before moving to Vidalia. His second wife, Miss Mattie Dutarte, who died in February, 1931, was the first

<sup>334</sup> Claiborne, p. 222.

\* Now U. S. Senator.



woman official in Concordia, she having served as an able and active member of the Board of Aldermen of Vidalia for several years. Judge Boatner was a man of pleasing address and jovial disposition.

On May 8, 1931, the local Bar adopted resolutions of respect to the memory of Judge Nathan Meredith Calhoun. Judge Calhoun was the son of Dr. Dabney P. and Ellen (Neely) Calhoun. He was born in Catahoula Parish, November 7, 1853. His great-great grandfather, William Calhoun, settled at Ninety-six, Abbeville District, South Carolina, about 1765, and was killed by the notorious British tory, "Bloody Bill Cunningham," in one of his raids during the Revolution. Judge Calhoun's father moved to Catahoula Parish in the early 40's, where he engaged in planting and in the practice of medicine all of his life. In 1878, Judge Calhoun married Miss Nannie Newit Williams of Ouachita Parish. Her father, the Rev. Robert T. Williams, was born in North Carolina in 1815.

While not on the list of officers, it is in order to note that on June 15, 1882, the Vidalia Bar paid glowing tribute to the memory of Judge William B. Spencer, and we excerpt the following:

"Resolved—That in the death of Judge Spencer, this bar has lost its brightest ornament, and the State a most valuable citizen, who, by his integrity of character and the purity and sincerity of his life, had won the respect and highest esteem of all who knew him."

Judge Spencer was born in Catahoula Parish, February 5, 1835, and died at Cordova, Mexico, April 29, 1882. In 1862, he enlisted in the Confederate Army at Harrisonburg, and attained a captaincy. During the Reconstruction period he maintained his residence in Concordia. He represented our District in Congress from May, 1876, to January, 1877; and was appointed and served as an able Associate Justice of the Supreme Court from January, 1877, to April, 1880.<sup>235</sup>

On October 11, 1910, resolutions were adopted by the Bar in memory of Leonard F. Mason, lawyer, parish official and Secretary of State from 1890 to 1894. Judge Mason's outstanding trait was kindness. He was excellent company, possessing a fine sense of humor and a fund of good stories—always chaste.

<sup>235</sup> Fortier, Vol. 2, p. 489; Centenary La. Sup. Ct. pp. 31, 65.

The Bar adopted resolutions of respect to the memory of John Stirling Boatner, Jr., on January 17, 1914. Taken in his young manhood, Mr. Boatner was at the threshold of a promising career.

At the same time, the Bar paid its tribute to the memory of Samuel Lucius Elam, lawyer and Confederate veteran. Judge Elam was slow of movement and of speech; awkward; and he wore ill-fitting clothes and "musical" shoes—but a "diamond in the rough" nevertheless.

Not having access to the journals of the Legislature, the writer cannot give a complete list of Concordia's State Senators and Representatives. In the Senate, Judge C. C. Cordill, of Tensas, succeeded Col. Walton in 1884; and this veteran Senator continued to represent us until 1912, when he was succeeded by George H. Clinton. In 1916 Mr. Clinton was succeeded by Frank L. Guthrie for one term; Mr. Clinton being again returned in 1920. Since 1924, this District having been given two Senators, we have been represented by C. C. Brooks of Tensas and Norris C. Williamson of East Carroll.\*

In the House, since 1900, Concordia has been represented by: Dr. J. L. Clayton and John Dale; the late Edward C. Rhodes, who was succeeded by the late John E. Clayton. Mr. Clayton was succeeded by H. B. Conner, present State Treasurer, who was succeeded by R. S. Wilds, incumbent.

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## CHAPTER XX

### AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Cotton production has been the main pursuit of our parish since the first settlement. Prior to the Civil War, and thereafter with an interim for readjustment, Concordia was rated one of the State's banner cotton parishes. In the adjoining Natchez District tobacco and indigo were grown and exported in large quantities as late as 1794.<sup>336</sup> Our early settlers immediately directed their efforts to cotton production, with corn and other forage crops for domestic use.

The Natchez District planters procured their first seed from Georgia and Jamaica. The seed was black. It produced a very fine fiber and staple, and was the only variety planted in this

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\* Our State Senators now are D. B. Fleming of Concordia and Andrew Sevier of Madison.

<sup>336</sup> Claiborne, p. 140.

section prior to 1811, when "the rot" appeared and ruined the crop for several years. The writer has noted old letters in our archives in which this is mentioned. New seeds were imported, including a variety brought in by Dr. Rush Nutt of Mississippi, which he improved and called "Petit Gulf," which proved to be immune and was planted all over the cotton zone.<sup>337</sup>

The Vidal gin, heretofore mentioned, was probably the first in Concordia. The early gins were the old lever "horse gins," many of which remained in use after the Civil War. The writer can remember two or three of them still in use in his youth. Three to five bales per day was a good day's ginning. Dr. Nutt, son-in-law of Judge Ker who owned plantations in Concordia, was the first to substitute steam for horse-power at his Mississippi gin in 1830; and Claiborne says that: "Mr. Alexander, an enterprising planter on Lake Concordia was the second, and Job Routh on his plantation on Lake Saint Joseph, was the third."<sup>338</sup>

The first screw cotton press was made in Philadelphia in 1799.<sup>339</sup> In the early days cotton seed was merely a waste product. Even after the Civil War it had little value and was allowed to rot in the gin-lots. Knapp invented a machine for separating the hull from the kernel in 1855, and the manufacture of cotton-seed oil was thereafter established on a practicable and profitable basis. In 1860 there were only seven cotton seed oil mills in the United States.<sup>340</sup>

Under the Confederate Treasury regulations of May 20, 1861, during the early years of the Civil War, many of our planters sold their cotton for account of the Confederate States Government, that is, the proceeds of the sales were turned over to the Treasury in money and the planters received the net returns in 8% Confederate bonds. From the report of the U. S. Treasury Department, made from Confederate Government records, showing the names of all sellers, the number of bales sold by each, the place where stored, and the value and date of sale, we have compiled the following list for Concordia:

W. D. Adams, Robert Carter, F. B., L. P. & W. G. Conner, A. V. Davis, W. Dix, Adm'r. A. W. Hill, W. C. Gillespie, D. M. Hayden, John Holmes, Benj. B. Hunter, John Johnson, M. S. & H. W. Ker, Marks & Ross, A. P. Merrill, Jr., Edward Miller, P. L. Mitchell, Robert Oak-

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 141.

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>340</sup> Fortier, Vol. I, pp. 290, 291.



man, R. W. Prater, D. L. Rivers, B. W. Rourke, George F. Sanderson, G. W. Sargent, J. W. Sessions, W. B. Shields, Walton P. Smith, Est. D. S. Stacy, Edward Sparrow, F. Surget, T. H. Thornhill, Est. D. F. Miller, Robert Walker, S. W. Warren, D. P. Williams, Lewis Winston, York & Hoover and Z. York.

The largest single sale was of 458 bales, amounting to \$18,132.40, made by J. W. Sessions.<sup>341</sup>

The following is a tabulation from official U. S. census reports of cotton production in Concordia Parish:

Year	No. Bales	Remarks.
1840	.....	19,490,600 Lbs. (Not reported in bales).
1850	18,297	400 Lbs. Standard.
1860	63,971	400 Lbs. Standard.
1870	26,712	Standard not given.
1880	33,110	Standard not given.
1890	38,738	Standard not given.
1900	27,799	500 Lbs. standard or 28,751 com'l bales.
1910	4,929	500 Lbs. standard
1920	3,591	500 Lbs. standard
1925	16,733	500 Lbs. standard (Ph. Statistician's Report).
1929	8,606	500 Lbs. standard (Ph. Statistician's Report).
1930	12,625	500 Lbs. standard (Ph. Statistician's Report).

The crop of 1840, if lint-weight, equivalent to 48,728 bales of 400 pound standard, included the production in what is now the Tensas area also. The 1860 crop seems remarkably large, but the number of slaves reached its peak at that time. The practical failures of 1910 and 1920 were due to boll weevil and unusually bad seasons.

In the 1890's a large oil mill was built at Vidalia by the Union Oil Company, and shortly after another mill was erected, the Concordia Oil Mill. Both flourished until the advent of the boll weevil in 1907, and they were subsequently dismantled. This pest drove a number of our planters into rice culture; and for several years several thousand acres of rice was grown in the Parish, with considerable success. A large rice mill was erected in Vidalia in 1910, and was operated for several years. Our planters, hav-

<sup>341</sup> "Cotton Sold to the Confederate States," Senate Doc. No. 987, 62nd Cong., 3rd Sess., Gov't Pt'g Off., 1913.

ing learned methods for combatting the boll weevil in the hard school of experience, returned to their first love and the rice mill was abandoned.

At our request, Mr. C. P. Seab, Parish Demonstration Agent since 1920, has kindly contributed the following interesting sketch of the progress which has been and is being made along agricultural and other lines in Concordia Parish:

"The Ginner's Reports of 1925, 1929 and 1930, as given, are each about 1500 to 2000 bales short of actual production in the Parish, due to the fact that at least that much of Concordia's production was ginned in Catahoula and Tensas Parishes and in Mississippi, and was reported where ginned.

"In 1920 only short-staple varieties were grown, such as King, Simpkins, Triumph, etc. It was grown in wide rows, thinly spaced; no commercial fertilizers were being used and few of the planters attempted to control the boll weevil. Since 1920 there has been much improvement locally in methods of cotton production. Old short-staple varieties have been entirely replaced by fast maturing long-staples, mostly of the Delfos strains. The rows are more uniform in width, closer together and the stalks are spaced thicker in the drill. Where no commercial fertilizers were used in 1920, five hundred tons of readily available nitrogenous fertilizers were used in 1929 and a larger quantity is being used in 1930. In 1929 sixty per cent of our cotton was poisoned with calcium arsenate, to control the boll weevil; high powered dusting machines, including airplanes, being used for its application.

"In the past few years many farm tractors have been bought, with the necessary equipment for plowing and preparing the land for planting; and for two and four-row cultivators, mowers and cotton dusters, etc. More and more corn and cotton is being planted in checks each year, and cultivated with four-row tractor cultivators.

"Corn has always been grown for domestic use, but since the inception of tractor farming it is now being developed into a commercial crop. The same may be said of oats since the introduction of harvesting combines. Soy beans are now extensively grown as a seed crop, the harvesting done with combines. For years, lespedeza and cow peas have supplied the domestic hay crop, but more recently alfalfa is taking their place, with increased acreage each year, and it is becoming a commercial crop.

"Our planters are alive to the progressive work of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and of the Agricultural Department of the State University; and of the Farmer's "Short Courses" and cooperative meetings. Modern machinery and methods are reducing the quantum of negro labor required.

"In the live stock field many thousand head of high-grade cattle thrive on luxurious pastures of native growth white Dutch clover, lespedeza and bermuda grass; and in the autumn and winter months these cattle thrive on the native grass which grows in the shallow lakes and along the bayous, and remains green all winter. Dairying has met the local demand only, but we have some of the best Jersey herds in the state. Concordia cleaned up the Texas cattle fever ticks years ago, and by persistent effort we have been able to keep the Parish clear of this injurious pest. Many thousand head of hogs are shipped from Concordia each year.

"The peach, the pear and the plum produce splendidly, both as to quantity and quality, but unfortunately all of the fine orchards were destroyed by the flood of 1927. They are being renewed. The dependable fruit crop of the Parish, however, is the fig. It is uniformly abundant and no finer figs can be grown anywhere.

"The pecan is an important commercial asset to the Parish. We have more than ten thousand grafted pecan trees. One of the oldest and largest groves in the State, two miles from Ferriday, planted and developed by Prof. Vandeman, is now in full bearing. Smaller groves are reaching the bearing stage and in recent years Hon. A. B. Learned has started a grove of more than six thousand trees. There has been much 'top-working' of native seedling pecans. The boys and girls Agricultural Club of the Monterey High School is actively engaged in top-working native seedlings into the large paper-shell varieties, and many are bearing at present. The forests abound in native seedling pecans which bring a good price and are quite a source of revenue in productive years.

"Nature has abundantly supplied Concordia with products of the forest, lake and stream. Many tons of Spanish moss, of which there is an unlimited quantity, is gathered, cured and shipped. There is one moss gin in the Parish. Tons of buffalo, cat and other fish are shipped from the Parish every year; and our native frog reaches many distant markets. During 1929 one plantation store paid out over ten thousand dollars for frogs, caught by people during spare time. The trapping of fur-bearing animals is also a thriving industry.



"The hard wood lumbering industry of our Parish is next in importance to its cotton production. Several large mills have been established and in operation since about 1910, when hard wood lumber began coming into favor.

"Home life in Concordia is pleasant. The farmer or planter has his dairy herd, his vegetable garden and his poultry. Most of the residences are equipped with the modern comforts and conveniences—screens, running water, telephone and radio; and many of them with electric lights. The farmer has his car and good roads on which to travel. He has his wide porches and halls; and his lady has her spacious lawn, shaded with moss-draped trees and an attractive garden of evergreens, roses and other flowers and shrubs."

(To be Continued)



## HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PARTY IN LOUISIANA

By W. DARRELL OVERDYKE, A. B.  
Shreveport, La.

### FIFTH INSTALLMENT

(Continued from July, 1933, Quarterly)

#### CHAPTER V.

##### DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN PARTY IN LOUISIANA

THE NARROW margin of victory in 1856 made the Democrats fear that the Americans, by gaining a larger majority in New Orleans would control the state. Therefore measures were taken to prevent such an occurrence. Governor Wickliffe's message to the Legislature in January 1857, emphasized the point that in New Orleans only 8,333 had voted whereas 11,817 had registered. "These facts," he said, "demonstrate that some extraordinary cause was at work to prevent a large proportion of lawful voters from enjoying the sacred franchise." This "extraordinary cause" was the violence countenanced and participated in by the Americans. The Governor asked for an election statute which would enforce the principles of the registration law.<sup>1</sup>

In March, 1857, the Legislature complied with his request by passing the 'Election Bill'<sup>2</sup> which applied only to Orleans parish. It provided for a Central Board of Election to be composed of the Mayor of New Orleans, the Attorney General, the Registrar of Voters, and two citizens of the city appointed by the Governor. This Board appointed commissioners to conduct the elections and to preside at the polls. The office of Superintendent of Elections was also created. He had the power to appoint as many deputies as he desired and could arrest any one he chose without warrant on mere suspicion that a breach of peace was contemplated. These deputies could not be arrested by any local or state force during the election, as all civil police power was suspended. Citizens were required under a heavy penalty to

<sup>1</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Jan. 21, 1857; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Jan. 25, 1857.

<sup>2</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Feb. 26, March 5, 14, 1857.

serve as deputies when called upon. The city of New Orleans was to be held responsible for all expense incurred by the board.

The Americans called this a "revolutionary bill" and "wild, misguided, tyrannical legislation."<sup>3</sup> "The purpose of one section of the election bill is so odious," said the *Delta*, "that we are surprised that even Baton Rouge legislators would dare to propose such a measure. It is that giving the Attorney General, as a reward for his prosecution, twenty per cent of the money extracted from his victims. Allow this and we revive the days of Titus Oates and other Knaves, and no man is secure. Give blood money to a public officer and he invariably sinks into a bloodsucker."<sup>4</sup> The *Bee* and the *Picayune* opposed the bill because they feared that enforcement would be resisted and because they distrusted the "fatuity of seeking to place the police administration of New Orleans under the supreme and irresponsible authority of the Governor."<sup>5</sup>

The *Crescent* made one very significant statement of the attitude of the Americans toward this new law: "If the Legislature of Louisiana supposes, that the free born, independent, intelligent, and honest citizens of this metropolis are going to submit to the unparalleled, uncalled for, and outrageous laws and tyrannies proposed by this bill—that they will tamely truckle to the abrogation of a right of trial by jury, and consent to a revival of the atrocious system of imprisonment for debt—they are woefully mistaken. The future, under any and all circumstances that may arise can have nothing in store for us half as bad as this bill proposed to inflict upon us."<sup>6</sup> The ten American senators and the twenty-two American representatives in the Legislature issued an address directed against it.<sup>7</sup> American clubs over the state passed various resolutions of sympathy, and condemned the "tyranny of the legislature in passing the Election Law."<sup>8</sup>

The judicial elections of April resulted in the election of six American District Judges and several Assistant Justices.<sup>9</sup> The vote was light and the candidates were not purely party nominees.<sup>10</sup> Yet the Know Nothings rejoiced "that

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 26, 1857.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 27, 1857, quoting the *New Orleans Delta*, Feb. 26, 1857.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting the *New Orleans Bee* and *New Orleans Picayune*.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, May 28, 1857.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, March 24, 1857; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, March 22, 1857.

<sup>8</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 2, 21 ff., 1857.

<sup>9</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, April 5, 10, 1857.

<sup>10</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, April 6, 7, 1857.



every court in New Orleans will now be presided over by Americans and the wholesale manufacture of voters stopped, for at least four years."<sup>11</sup>

In the New Orleans municipal election the following month balloting was very light and orderly. Only 2,000 votes were cast.<sup>12</sup> The Democrats attempted to make nominations but the Slidellians and anti-Slidellians could not get together and left the field to the Americans.<sup>13</sup> Mayor Waterman refused to attend the meetings of the Election Board as he denied that it was constitutional. The Board was still so disorganized that it did not attempt to participate in this election.<sup>14</sup>

The National Council met in Louisville,<sup>15</sup> June 3, 1857, and abolished itself and all secrecy in the order. It provided for a new plan of organization with national officers. Each state and territory was allowed to organize as they wished. No mention was made of Louisiana's presence and the *New Orleans Courier* listed Louisiana among the numerous states not present.<sup>16</sup> The following rules of faith and action were adopted:

- "1 The Federal Union must be maintained.
- "2 The reserved rights of the states must be respected.
- "3 The decision of the Supreme Court must be enforced.
- "4 The Union of Church and State must be prevented.
- "5 The rights of conscience must be guaranteed.
- "6 American interests must be promoted.
- "7 An American nationality must be cherished.
- "8 Sectional agitation must be terminated.
- "9 Foreign paupers and criminals must be excluded.
- "10 The naturalization laws must be amended.
- "11 'Squatter Sovereignty' and alien suffrage must be repudiated.
- "12 Americans must rule America."<sup>17</sup>

Louisiana gave little attention to this national meeting as interest was centered in the state convention which met at Baton Rouge, July 9, 1857. It nominated candidates for Auditor, Treas-

<sup>11</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, April 19, 1857.

<sup>12</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 2, 1857; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 4, 1857.

<sup>13</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 30, 1857.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, May 28, 1857.

<sup>15</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 15, 1857; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 4, 12, 1857; Brand, *loc. cit.*, No. III, p. 294.

<sup>16</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 15, 1857, quoting the *New Orleans Courier*.

<sup>17</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 12, 1857.

urer, Superintendent of Public Education, and then separated into district conventions to make nominations for Congress.<sup>18</sup> The convention announced that, "However disastrous was the result of the last presidential election, there has been no abatement of patriotic ardor in our ranks in Louisiana . . . We have determined chiefly to direct our influence against the abuses of our state government, which under the control of the 'Democratic party' have grown so gigantic of late as to have trampled our constitution under foot, to have wasted our public lands, and to have neglected our public schools."<sup>19</sup> The convention authorized its president to appoint a new state executive committee—one member from each parish except Orleans which was to have fourteen. This committee was to draw up rules to promote close cooperation with each parish organization. It was instructed to issue an address stating the policy and benefits of the American party and embracing "a complete exposition of the outrages of the Democratic misrule in the government of the state."<sup>20</sup>

The address protested strongly against the dangers of immigration, especially to the south. It pointed out that the ballot was a sacred part of American life, as a right to vote was the right to govern. The address said that the American party was prepared to uphold the institutions of the south, that it was patriotic and devoted to political, civil, and religious liberty, and criticized the Democratic Governor of Kansas for failure to fully protect southern rights in the territory. It attacked the record of the Democrats, especially the Board of Public Works, the Swamp Land Commissioners, the Internal Improvement Bill, and the passage of the "Army Bill" as "an act without a parallel in the history of madness and tyranny of party in any state of the Union."<sup>21</sup>

State campaigning was enlivened by the struggle in New Orleans over the enforcement of the Election Bill. On July 23, the Mayor obtained an injunction prohibiting the election board from functioning.<sup>22</sup> The *Courier* claimed that the Americans had waited until a recess of the Supreme Court, so they could seek this action before a District Court.<sup>23</sup> Mayor Waterman that he had refused to take a seat on the board more than two months

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, June 5, 8, 1857.

<sup>19</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 9, 1857.

<sup>20</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 10, 1857.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 2, 1857.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, July 23, 1857.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, July 24, 1857, quoting the *New Orleans Courier*.

before, and the Superintendent of Elections had had plenty of time to have brought the case to court. On October 13, Judge Cotton enjoined the mayor from naming polling places,<sup>24</sup> which forced him to withdraw his injunction.<sup>25</sup>

The *Crescent*, provoked at what it considered an outrageous law, advised the grogshop keepers to disregard Cotton's notice to close on election day.<sup>26</sup> On election morning it counseled submission, but in such terms that passion was inflamed instead of subdued.<sup>27</sup>

New Orleans Democrats centered their attack upon alleged mismanagement of the city government, and the countenancing of crime and riotings.<sup>28</sup> In defense the Executive Committee of the American party issued an address giving a detailed account of the number of arrests, the causes, and the nationality of those arrested during American control. They called attention to the much smaller numbers arrested under Democratic administration, and attempted to show that the record of Mayor Waterman and a small police force more than vindicated the American party. The address pointed with pride to the fact that in the cases of Auld vs. Walton and Bell vs. Hufty the only votes proved to be fraudently cast were those for Democratic candidates. They asked, "Is it not probable that those who will disregard the laws of God and man, who will vote when they have no right to vote, but will commit even perjury to exercise that right, are the very persons who disturb the peace?" "That Native Americans occasionally are guilty of minor as well as the graver offences," they admitted, "is lamentably true; and that crime, in all its gradation will continue to shock the public conscience, is also unfortunately true; but that either party as a party is guilty of all the enormous offences which are committed is a libel upon human nature."<sup>29</sup> The Americans believed, "that despite the wanton abuse that has been unsparingly lavished upon us, despite the causeless and groundless calumnies . . . the iron facts, hard as cannon balls will prove that upon a comparison the reputation of New Orleans for peace, quietness, law and order, is just as good, if not much better than any city of similar size and population in the United States."<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, July 26, 1857.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 14, 15, 20, 1857.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1857.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1857.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1857.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 7-14, 1857; *Sugar Planter*, Sept. 26, 1857.

<sup>30</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, July 23, 1857.



The Democrats found trouble in their own ranks as dissension, slight traces of which had appeared before, now became marked. The Americans took great delight in referring to the "wheel within a wheel"—an epithet which the *Clinton Democrat* applied to the few men who formed an inner controlling ring within the Democratic party.<sup>31</sup> This paper asserted that "There is an organized party within the Democratic party of Louisiana as perfect we believe in all its arrangements and in its operation, its plans and secret purposes, as Know Nothingism ever was in the prestige of its greatest strength, and we hope and believe it is destined ere long to a fall as ignoble."<sup>32</sup>

The *Bastrop Advocate*, Morehouse parish, protested against waste of money by the state legislature and the overriding of constitutional law. It called upon all to help overcome the "Slidellian Clique."<sup>33</sup> For the first time in over forty years the Democrats in East Baton Rouge parish split into factions, each having their own separate head.<sup>34</sup> The breach was widest in the Third District. In the Judicial election the large Democratic majority in Lafourche parish faded to almost nothing, and the Democratic majority of six hundred in Assumption changed to an American victory.<sup>35</sup> At the Third District convention the anti-Slidellians bolted when the Slidellian faction nominated T. G. Davidson for Congress.<sup>36</sup> The bolters hoped to gain Know Nothing support by nominating a suitable candidate, but in this they were disappointed.<sup>37</sup> The Americans did all they could to foster this separation,<sup>38</sup> and repeatedly called attention to the worried statements of the *Courier* which feared defeat in the Third District.<sup>39</sup> The Democratic State Central Committee issued an appeal asking that no independent movement be started, as a united front was needed for the approaching national crisis.<sup>40</sup> This was directed toward the Democratic group that wished to leave and form a purely southern party.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, April 6, 1857, quoting the *Clinton Democrat*, Feb. 28, 1857.

<sup>32</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, April 6, 1857.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1857, quoting the *Bastrop Advocate*.

<sup>34</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Oct. 25, 1857.

<sup>35</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 26, 1857.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, July 1-8, 1857.

<sup>37</sup> *Sugar Planter*, Sept. 19, 1857.

<sup>38</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, July 10 ff., 1857.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 3, 1857, quoting the *New Orleans Courier*, Aug. 1, 1857.

<sup>40</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Sept. 13, 18, 1857.

<sup>41</sup> *Opelousas Courier*, Sept. 12, 1857.

The election was a decisive defeat for the Americans.<sup>42</sup> They lost the state by an average majority of 4,649,<sup>43</sup> although Eustis was returned to Congress. The Americans lost the Second District by less than a hundred votes, and in spite of a divided Democratic vote, lost the Third. They were swamped in the Fourth District by a Democratic majority of 3,800.<sup>44</sup> Of sixteen senators elected only two were Americans. The Senate was divided twenty-three to nine, and the House forty-nine to thirty-eight. Thus the Democrats had a majority of twenty-one votes on a joint ballot.<sup>45</sup> The Americans won scattered parish and city offices. Some districts went Democratic on the state ticket yet elected American local officials.<sup>46</sup> The New Orleans municipal election was a clear victory for the Americans.<sup>47</sup>

The Democrats in New Orleans<sup>48</sup> again claimed violence and fraud but this was more or less through force of habit as the election was much quieter than usual. No violence occurred at the polls, although there were the usual fistic encounters in the grog-shops before and after the election.<sup>49</sup> The Americans refused to coöperate with the Superintendent of Elections, Cotton. They indignantly refused to serve as deputies, sell him arms or munitions, or answer his summons. Cotton attempted to hire some three thousand deputies—many for ten dollars a day—at New Orleans' expense.<sup>50</sup>

In 1858 the only marked political movement affecting the Americans was in New Orleans. On May 20 an "Independent Ticket" was announced in opposition to the American party.<sup>51</sup> The Independents declared that under American control New Orleans' commerce was being ruined, her real estate was depreciating in value, and the city debt was increasing with a corresponding rise in taxes. They charged that the police were inefficient and corrupt, and gave no protection. They asserted that lax criminal

<sup>42</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Nov. 19, 1857; *Tribune Almanac for the Years 1858-1868*, Vol. II, Whig Almanac, 1858, pp. 60, 61.

<sup>43</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Dec. 7, 1857.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Nov. 19, 1857; *Opelousas Courier*, Nov. 28, 1857.

<sup>46</sup> For example Plaquemines, St. Landry, Carroll, and Rapides parishes.—*New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Nov. 6, 9, 10, 1857; *Sugar Planter*, Nov. 7, 1857; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Nov. 12, 1857.

<sup>47</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Nov. 9, 1857.

<sup>48</sup> Rumors were prevalent that steamboats, filled with Irishmen, had left St. Louis, Memphis, and Louisville, bound for Plaquemine, Donaldsonville, and other points in Louisiana, in order to flood the polls with illegal Democratic votes. The rumors were groundless.—*Ibid.*, Oct. 30 ff., 1857; *Sugar Planter*, Sept. 24, 1857.

<sup>49</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Nov. 3 ff., 1857.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1859.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, May 26, 1858.

administration allowed assassination and murder to destroy the reputation of the city.<sup>52</sup> The Independents claimed to be the reform group of the Democrats, Whigs and Americans.<sup>53</sup>

The Americans regarded this movement as one launched by the "Democratic wire pullers." They asserted that many of the honorable and respectable citizens who thought they were leading the movement were merely dupes of the Democrats under the name of "reform".<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless a close eye was kept on conditions. The Executive Committee of the American party met every night of the week before the election.<sup>55</sup> Most Americans nominated on the reform ticket refused to run.<sup>56</sup> The Independent party issued several notices that they would protect peaceful citizens in their right to vote. They called upon citizens to enroll and form armed squads, to march to and from the polls.<sup>57</sup> The Americans immediately countered with similar proclamations.<sup>58</sup>

On the last day for the registering of voters, June 2, 1858, there occurred a trivial difficulty at the registration booths. The Independents seized this as an excuse and, at three o'clock the next morning, two hundred armed men seized a state arsenal.<sup>59</sup> The "Vigilants" as they called themselves, provided with arms, ammunition, and cannon, encamped in Jackson Square.<sup>60</sup> They seized the "lock-up," police headquarters, and the courtroom of the Sixth District Court and posted guards to keep all people out.<sup>61</sup> That morning the *Courier* published an announcement signed by "The Vigilant Committee" which said, "Having resolved to free our city of the murderers who infest it, we have assumed its temporary government, ready to account to our God and to the laws of our country for the acts we are about to perform. We have no political object in view, and we call upon all true and good men to join . . . . We shall have order and security . . . . We shall inflict prompt and exemplary punishment upon well-known and notorious offenders . . . . and shall not lay down arms until this is effected."<sup>62</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, June 2, 1858.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting the *New Orleans Bulletin*, June 2, 1858.

<sup>54</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 31, June 1, 1858.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, June 4, 1858.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, May 28, June 3, 4, 1858.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, May 28-June 3, 1858.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, June 3, 1858.

<sup>59</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 3, 1858.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 4, 1858.

<sup>61</sup> The judge of this court was assaulted the next morning when he attempted to gain admittance to his courtroom.—*New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 6 ft., 1858. This Court was in the old Meeting Room of the Cabildo.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, June 4, 1858, quoting the *New Orleans Courier*, June 3, 1858.



The Mayor convened the city council in secret session and was given full power to handle the situation. He personally attempted to get the Vigilants to surrender, but their commander, Captain L. Duncan, Superintendent of the United States Marine Hospital, refused. Captain Duncan demanded that all his men should be sworn in as part of the election force. By this time the number of men in the camp had greatly increased. The Washington Artillery, the Southern Rifles, and the National and Continental Guards had been ordered by state commanding officers to stand ready to be called out the next day. Hundreds of citizens who had gathered arms and started drilling in military formations, stood ready to attack if the Mayor ordered.<sup>63</sup>

The Vigilants encamped in true military style—"the arsenal building crowded with men, all wearing intelligent countenances and a determined air, while the minie muskets are being brought out and stacked conveniently for instant use; the brass twelve pounder ready for dreadful deeds, with its mouth pointing so as to sweep Chartres street, down to Canal with grape, and the gunners with their ammunition besides it; the cordon of sentinels (in citizens dress but each armed with a minie musket) extending completely around Jackson Square, with the dense throngs of inquisitive persons pressing up against the line of sentinels,"<sup>64</sup> all tending to give it a look of anything but a peaceable city."<sup>65</sup>

The citizens of New Orleans could not understand the vacillating course of the Mayor. Several thousand of them were under arms, and with the aid of the militia the seven or eight hundred Vigilants could have been swamped.<sup>66</sup> The Vigilants were chiefly Irish and foreigners. The friends of these men paraded and held turbulent meetings under the name of "Irish Gallatin Boys."<sup>67</sup> The order to the state troops to assemble was revoked, and the citizens waited in vain for leaders.

For some reason the Mayor decided that his person was safer within the camp of the Vigilants than in the city and made his headquarters there. On June 5 he called the Chief of Police into the camp and gave him instructions as to the conduct of his subordinates. The Chief said he was unable to handle them as

<sup>63</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 4, 1858.

<sup>64</sup> An enterprising merchant took advantage of the excitement and ran a series of ads, one of which read, "THE SKIRMISH AROUND MOODY'S This morning, has in no measure deteriorated the renown of the celebrated 'Bullet-proof' shirts so much in demand during the present exciting times. . . ."—*Ibid.*, June 5 ft., 1858.

<sup>65</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 3, 1858.

<sup>66</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 5, 1858.

<sup>67</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 3, 1858.

they weren't on their beats or reporting to the office, but merely wandering around at their own pleasure. The Mayor then acceded to the demands of the Vigilants; he and the Superintendent of Elections, J. B. Lewis, commissioned them in a body special election police, guaranteed them from molestation for their actions, and permitted them to remain in camp until they were sworn in.<sup>68</sup> The Vigilants pledged themselves to attend the polls and protect every legal voter and to seize and punish any offender against law and order.<sup>69</sup>

After this agreement the Mayor announced that the matter had been settled satisfactorily to both sides and requested the citizens to lay down their arms. Some disappointed and blood thirsty men started to drag their six cannon toward the "enemy" preparatory to starting a fight, but cooler heads prevailed.<sup>70</sup>

That afternoon a commission of men obtained permission from the Vigilants to see the Mayor. From him they obtained a written authorization for Recorder Stith to swear in citizens as special policemen, and some two thousand were deputized. In the evening, just before the city council met, the Mayor sent a written order to Stith revoking this authority. The council drew up articles of impeachment of Mayor Waterman and declared Recorder Summers Mayor pro-tempore. Waterman then asked to be allowed to come up town. Stith went to the camp to protect him, and conducted him to the St. Charles Hotel, where he obtained a promise from the crowd not to harm Waterman. When Waterman left, the Vigilants openly charged him with breach of faith in giving Stith the authorization to appoint special policemen.<sup>71</sup>

The night of June 5 both "camps" sent out scouting parties to prevent surprise attacks which both expected. These patrols met several times but no blood was shed, although each side "arrested" several persons as "spies." About two o'clock one Vigilant patrol returned by a different rout than they were supposed to. The guards mistook them for the "enemy" and shot off the cannon that commanded the street, which killed four and seriously wounded eight of the party.<sup>72</sup>

Sunday, June 6, both sides continued to hold their respective forts—there quarters of a mile apart—the Vigilants at Jackson Square, the citizens at Lafayette Square. Mayor Summers ordered

<sup>68</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 5, 1858.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, June 5, 19, 1858.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, June 5, 1858.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, June 7, 1858.

<sup>72</sup> The character of the Vigilants is shown by the fact that of eight of those wounded by the grape shot, three were Irish, two were German, and one was Swiss.

the Vigilants to disband but was ignored. The regular chief of police, influenced by a three thousand dollar bribe, the Americans claimed,<sup>73</sup> had left the city. A new police force was organized and put on the beats to keep down robbery, scattered shooting, and disorder. Such a force was badly needed, for one murderer had been caught in the act, but no police could be found in the city to jail him. The arrival of fifty two Federal soldiers from Baton Rouge to protect the mint and customs occasioned some excitement at first. It was feared that they had come to reinforce the Vigilants.

The morning of election day—June 7—found both sides continuing to hold their camps. Two hundred Vigilants marched from poll to poll during the day, but the election was peaceful and quiet.<sup>74</sup> In the evening the citizens broke up their camp and returned home. That night the Vigilants abandoned huge piles of food, bedding, and most of the rifles, bayonets, pistols, etc., which had been stolen from the arsenal.<sup>75</sup> Many were afraid that some action would be taken against them, and left the city for "health trips" to the northern part of the state, or to Mississippi. A few ignorant foreigners fled to the marshes, where they hid until forced back by hunger.<sup>76</sup>

The Americans won a decisive victory in the election. The Independents elected only three aldermen and one recorder.<sup>77</sup> Gerard Stith, the new Mayor, ran behind his ticket. This showed that the voting was not strictly on a party basis. The Independent movement was undoubtedly an honest attempt to reform the government of New Orleans. Such men as C. M. Conrad, who had been Secretary of War under Fillmore, signed the call for its formation.<sup>78</sup> Its chances of success would probably have been much greater had it not resorted to violence. The regular Americans held no grudge against those who had "strayed" into the Independent fold, but welcomed them back when the movement failed. The main body of Independents, however, were regarded as Democrats in sheep's clothing.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>73</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 7, 18, 1858.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, June 8, 1858; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 10, 1858.

<sup>75</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 8, 1858; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 10, 1858; *Opelousas Courier*, June 19, 1858, quoting the *New Orleans Bulletin*, June 8, 1858; *Ibid.*, quoting the *New Orleans Bee*, June 9, 1858.

<sup>76</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 9 ff., 1858.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, June 10, 1858; *Sugar Planter*, June 12, 1858.

<sup>78</sup> *Opelousas Courier*, June 12, 1858; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, June 10, 1858.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, June 4-15, 1858; *Sugar Planter*, June 5, 1858.



After the New Orleans election, one of the chief topics of interest was the coming presidential campaign. Douglas made a trip to the Crescent City and was vociferously received.<sup>81</sup> New Orleans papers, the *Bee*, *Bulletin*, and especially the *Crescent*, talked favorably of Douglas. They did not really affiliate themselves with his party but merely "discussed" Democratic candidates for the nomination.<sup>82</sup>

Early in 1859 the impending break in Democratic ranks was again shown in the contest in the House over the election of United States Senator to succeed Benjamin. When a Democratic caucus declared Benjamin the party candidate on a close vote the anti-Slidellian group broke away and selected a pronounced secessionist.<sup>83</sup> The Americans supported their own candidate, and for forty-one ballots no decision could be reached.<sup>84</sup> With the support of five Americans Benjamin was elected on the next ballot.<sup>85</sup> The anti-Slidellians had counted strongly upon American support,<sup>86</sup> and were bitter when this was refused.<sup>87</sup> The *Sugar Planter* explained: "The American party, it is true, is now disorganized but the mass of that party hold that this Union must and shall be preserved, and it is a fatal mistake to suppose that they will ever unite with those whose political antecedents tend to disunion. Bitter as is our opposition to the Slidell and Buchanan influence in this state, and in the nation, it is nothing in comparison to our opposition to sectionalism. The sooner this is known and understood, the better for political aspirants."<sup>88</sup>

In March, 1859, certain members of the Legislature attempted to revive the old Whig party.<sup>89</sup> Their address laid this down as a fundamental proposition: that amongst a free people, different parties, in a political sense must exist, or else general stagnation."<sup>90</sup> It stated that the American party was in fragments and, since neither wing of the Democrats was desirable, the grand old Whig party should be revived. That party which had "slumbered but not died" was called upon to "Arise, arise, shake off the dewdrops that glitter on your garments, and once more

<sup>81</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Oct. 3 ff., 1858.

<sup>82</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Oct. 14 ff., 1858.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 25, 26, 1859.

<sup>84</sup> There were still thirty-one Americans and Independents in the Lower House.—*Ibid.*, March 16, 1859.

<sup>85</sup> *Sugar Planter*, Jan. 29, 1859.

<sup>86</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Jan. 16, 23, 1859.

<sup>87</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Jan. 28 ff., 1859.

<sup>88</sup> *Sugar Planter*, Jan. 29, 1859.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, March 26, 1859; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, March 21, 1859.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

move to battle and to victory." Some American papers, especially the *Sugar Planter*, at first supported this movement,<sup>91</sup> while others opposed the loss of separate identity.<sup>92</sup> But the plan did not materialize. The Americans were not entirely defunct although their strength had dwindled. Only three country papers remained to the party.<sup>93</sup> In Avoyelles,<sup>94</sup> East Feliciana and other parishes the "kettle was kept boiling" in hope that the two Democratic factions would "kick the pot over" to the advantage of the Americans.<sup>95</sup>

In May George Eustis, Jr., who had served four years in Congress, withdrew from the party because "The fusion of the shattered legions of the Americans in most of the free states, with the Republican party—their repeated and overwhelming defeats in the Southern States—the sectional color assumed by the politics of the country leave no room to doubt the fact that, as a national party the American party no longer exists."<sup>96</sup> Other prominent Know Nothing leaders, as Peter Alexander, Louis Texada, Robert Fuller, R. Wilkinson, George Wooley, and Robert Pond, began to see the handwriting on the wall and changes to the Democrats became numerous.<sup>97</sup>

The annual New Orleans municipal election found an independent ticket again in the field. The *Courier* didn't support the movement as they desired the Democrats to put forth a ticket of their own.<sup>98</sup> The *Delta* led the attack by demanding a change to a non-partisan set of officials who would reduce high taxation, keep the streets clean of mud and filth that clogged them, provide plenty of water, and render more impartial justice.<sup>99</sup> The *Crescent* as usual defended the American party and its record in office, and refuted every point advanced by the Independents.<sup>100</sup>

The previous advances to the Germans had been received in such a friendly way, that an active campaign was conducted by the American party among them.<sup>101</sup> The election was another

<sup>91</sup> *Sugar Planter*, March 26, April 2 ff., 1859.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting the *Houma Ceres*, April 2, 1859; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, March 21 ff., 1859.

<sup>93</sup> *Sugar Planter*, July 2, 1859, gives these as the *Houma Ceres*, the *Alexandria American*, and itself.

<sup>94</sup> *Louisiana Democrat*, Sept. 14, 1858, quoting the *Avoyelles Pelican*.

<sup>95</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 14, 1859.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, May 16, 1859.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, March 17, 1859; *Sugar Planter*, June 4, 1859; *Opelousas Courier*, May 21, 1859; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, July 24, 1859.

<sup>98</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 21, 1859.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, June 3 ff., 1859.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, May 30 ff., 1859.

<sup>101</sup> The Americans claimed there was nothing strange or new in this!—*Ibid.*, June 1, 1859; *Sugar Planter*, June 4, 1859.

American victory.<sup>102</sup> Only a light vote was cast but some violence occurred. The Americans attempted to prove that this was the fault of the Democrats because the local police had been prohibited from keeping order and the Democratic Superintendent had failed to do so.<sup>103</sup>

On August 24, 1859, a notice was inserted in the *Crescent* calling for a meeting of all who opposed the state ticket recently nominated by the Democrats.<sup>104</sup> Opposition groups had sprung up over the state and were eager to coöperate in a state movement. Avoyelles, Caddo, and Rapides parishes had especially strong organizations.<sup>105</sup> A state convention was called to meet in Baton Rouge on September 2, 1859, but such short notice was given that few northern or distant parishes could send delegates. The *Sugar Planter* and the *Baton Rouge Gazette* were both dubious about the party on this account,<sup>106</sup> but later both swung into line with vigor. The *Crescent* at first held back and would not commit itself,<sup>107</sup> but gradually talked itself into support.<sup>108</sup> Democratic internal strife made such a movement propitious. In accordance with Soule's threat to "regenerate and reform the party," the "recussant" Democrats met on October 24 to elect delegates to cooperate in an opposition meeting.<sup>109</sup> From all sections of the state rumblings against the continued control of the "King" of Louisiana—Slidell—were voiced.<sup>110</sup>

The convention met on September 12 and nominated a full ticket, including Thomas J. Wells of Rapides parish for Governor, Adolphe Oliver, the "creole pony" from St. Mary, for Auditor, and Charles P. Dreaux of New Orleans for Secretary of State.<sup>111</sup> The platform earnestly deprecated "the further agitation of the irritating questions connected with the institution of slavery," attacked the course of the Democrats in Congress and criticised the abuse of the executive veto and appointive power. Several

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, June 7, 1859.

<sup>103</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, June 8, 1859.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug. 24, 1859.

<sup>105</sup> *Louisiana Democrat*, Aug. 31, 1859.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> The papers that eventually came to support the opposition ticket were: *Bastrop Advocate*; *Vernon Times*; *Marksville Central Organ*; *Sugar Planter*, West Baton Rouge; *Thibodaux Gazette*; *Shreveport Southwestern*; *Clinton Patriot*; *Campiti Times*; *Red River American*; *St. Martinville Courier*; *Houma Ceres*; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*; *New Orleans Bulletin*; *Mechasebe*, St. Charles parish; and others.

<sup>108</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Sept. 2, 8, 13, 1859.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1859; *National Intelligencer*, Sept. 3, 1859.

<sup>110</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, March 11, July 7, Oct. 29, Dec. 12, 1859; *Ibid.*, July 7, 1859, quoting the *Houma Ceres*, July 2, 1859; *Opalouzas Courier*, Oct. 29, 1859; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Sept. 13, 1859; *Ibid.*, Sept. 8, 1859, quoting the *St. Martinville Courier*, Sept. 3, 1859.

<sup>111</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Sept. 14, 26, 1859; *Louisiana Democrat*, Sept. 21, 1859.



planks attacked the Democratic party for corruption, waste of money, misuse of the swamp lands, and lack of a constructive state policy. The last plank solicited "the cordial coöperation of all citizens without distinction of party, who favor the above resolutions, to unite with us in electing our state nominees."<sup>112</sup>

The old Know Nothings had several objections to the party, its platform, and nominees. The influence of disgruntled Democrats in organizing the party—especially the hand of Pierre Soule, was distasteful.<sup>113</sup> There was much opposition from the country people who did not get to send delegates to help make the nominations.<sup>114</sup> The *Sugar Planter* dryly remarked that the Democrats had had a full set of delegates but still John Slidell kept everyone's fingers out.<sup>115</sup> Some found difficulty in conciliating the old Know Nothing anti-foreign doctrine with the last clause of the new platform which invited "all citizens" to coöperate.<sup>116</sup>

In New Orleans the Americans took pains to keep their own separate and distinct organization,<sup>117</sup> and nominated their own parish and congressional ticket.<sup>118</sup> The Slidellian Democrats attempted to split the American vote by starting "Independent American Clubs," but met with little success.<sup>119</sup> The *Crescent* several times jeered at the state Opposition party yet advised that it be supported.<sup>120</sup> Whenever big rallies and mass meetings were held the American clubs marched to them in a body and left in a body to insure their separateness of organization being marked.<sup>121</sup> At several of these meetings Pierre Soule was scheduled to make addresses, but for some reason "illness" always opportunely prevented.<sup>122</sup>

The campaign was one of interest to all the state.<sup>123</sup> Division had grown in the Democracy until there was a multiplicity of names used to describe various factions. It was declared that there were, Hard Shell Democrats, Soft Shell Democrats, Old

<sup>112</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Sept. 19 ff., 1859.

<sup>113</sup> A hasty investigation would tend to lead to the conviction that the Democrats played the leading part in the formation of the party, but this is erroneous.

<sup>114</sup> *Sugar Planter*, Oct. 8, 14, 1859; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Sept. 16, 29, Oct. 14, 1859; *Opelousas Courier*, Oct. 1, 1859, quoting the *Natchitoches Chronicle*.

<sup>115</sup> *Sugar Planter*, Oct. 15, 1859.

<sup>116</sup> *Sugar Planter*, Sept. 24, 1859.

<sup>117</sup> *Louisiana Democrat*, Aug. 24, Nov. 5, 1859; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Aug. 28 ff., 1859.

<sup>118</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Oct. 24 ff., 1859; *Sugar Planter*, Oct. 18, 1859.

<sup>119</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Oct. 28, 1859; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Sept. 29, 1859.

<sup>120</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Oct. 13, Sept. 13, Nov. 5, 7, 1859.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 25, 31, Nov. 2, 5, 7, 1859.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, Oct. 13, 31, 1859.

<sup>123</sup> *Louisiana Democrat*, Aug. 17, 24, 1859; *Sugar Planter*, Oct. 8, 1859.

Liner Democrats, Short and Long Tailed Democrats, Know Nothing Democrats, Douglas and anti-Douglas Democrats, Old Jackson Democrats, Union and States Rights Democrats, Old Whig Democrats, Slidellians in Easy Circumstances, Slidellians Who Had Not Been Paid, Opposition Democrats, Independent Ex-Know Nothing Democrats, Calhoun Democrats, Independents, and Americans.<sup>124</sup>

The day of the election the *Crescent* advised coöperation with the Superintendent of Election. The American Mayor for the first time directed the police to be diligent and keep order over the city<sup>125</sup>—by the "Army Bill" they had no power near the polls. Despite the prediction of the *Delta* that the election would mean "the most detestable, most disgraceful and ruinous of all conceivable forms of civil war" and that "implements of the most approved description for terrifying, disabling, maiming, or killing men"<sup>126</sup> would be used, little violence occurred. The *Crescent* reminded the *Delta* that the use of such terms as "the clank of arms," "the gleam of the secret knife," "that beautiful 'artistic tool' the brass knuckle", "pistol shots signalize the coming of night," "plug uglies," etc., in discussing the election, would more naturally bring on a disturbance than prevent one.

The election returns<sup>127</sup> showed that the Democrats had carried their state ticket by about 9,000 votes. An American was elected to Congress from the First District. The Oppositionists lost the Second, Third, and Fourth Districts by 1,466, 5,562, and 5,603 votes respectively. The American ticket in the First District was elected almost to the man; the Democrats obtained only three of the representatives.<sup>128</sup> Several parishes went Democratic for the state ticket, but chose Opposition or Independent local officials.<sup>129</sup> In some instances this was the result of deliberate bargains or trades.

This election put sixty-two Democrats and thirty-six Oppositionists and Independents in the Lower House. The following parishes had anti-Democratic representation: Jefferson, St Charles Ascension, Terrebonne, St. Landry, East Feliciana, Washington,

<sup>124</sup> *Sugar Planter*, Oct. 1, 1859; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Sept. 18, 1859, quoting the *Red River Democrat*, Oct. 14, 1859.

<sup>125</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Nov. 7, 1859.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 3, 1859, quoting the *New Orleans Delta*, Nov. 2, 1859.

<sup>127</sup> *Tribune Almanac for the Years 1858-1868*, Vol. II, Whig Almanac, 1860, p. 37.

<sup>128</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Nov. 9, 1859.

<sup>129</sup> Such as DeSoto, Calborne, Sabine, Bossier, St. Landry, Bienville, East Feliciana, Terrebonne, Rapides, and others.—*Bossier Banner*, Nov. 11, 18, 1859; *Opelousas Courier*, Nov. 10, 26, Dec. 3, 1859; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Nov. 10, 1859.

Concordia, Morehouse, Union, Jackson, Claiborne, Caddo, Franklin, Natchitoches, and Bossier.<sup>130</sup> The parishes having anti-Democratic Senators were: Orleans, East and West Baton Rouge, Franklin, Carroll, Claiborne, Morehouse, and Ouachita.<sup>131</sup>

By 1860 the American party had nearly passed into history. In 1859 its identity had been merged into the Opposition party and except for some half dozen or more parishes of which Orleans was the chief, it no longer retained its name. As a whole the old Americans and Whigs did not wish to merge permanently with the Democrats. The American party since its birth had repeatedly gone on record in favor of continuance of the Union. The Democratic leaders of Louisiana had from time to time revealed strong leanings toward secession. Naturally it would have been hard for two such groups to work in harmony. H. J. Hyams, editor of the *Sugar Planter*, was one of the most ardent exponents of the formation of a new national party. As early as June 5, 1858, he wrote: "The indications of popular sentiment in favor of the organization of a Great Constitutional Party, that should ignore sectionalism experimenting, trifling and demagoguery (of) all sorts, are growing more and more decided and come to us from every quarter . . . a constitutional party may be framed that will be irresistible. The times call for it, and the people, tired of being humbugged are ready for it."<sup>132</sup> Three weeks later he warned the *Plaquemine Gazette and Sentinel* that a new party, which all the followers of 'Sam' would join, would be in the field in 1860.<sup>133</sup>

The chief organ of the Know Nothings—the *Crescent*—at first did not favor a new party with national issues. It feared that such a movement would weaken the Democrats and allow the "Black Republicans" to gain control.<sup>134</sup> But after the organization of the Constitutional Union party its attitude changed and it announced, "We do not commit ourselves unconditionally to the support of this ticket. We are for defeating the Black Republicans and shall embrace the most feasible plans . . . This is no time to quarrel over old party lines."<sup>135</sup>

<sup>130</sup> *Bossier Banner*, Dec. 9, 1859; *Louisiana Democrat*, Nov. 16, 1859.

<sup>131</sup> *Louisiana Democrat*, Nov. 23, 1859.

<sup>132</sup> *Sugar Planter*, June 5, 1858.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, June 26, 1858.

<sup>134</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, March 21, 1859, Feb. 22 ff., 1860.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, May 12, 1860.



The Constitutional Union party was the outgrowth of a meeting of the National American Central Committee, of which Charles M. Conrad of Louisiana was a member.<sup>135</sup> On May 9, 1860, delegates from twenty states, Louisiana among them, met in Baltimore and nominated John Bell for the presidency and Edward Everett for the vice-presidency. The Constitution was adopted as the platform.<sup>137</sup> Immediately numerous endorsement meetings of its course and action were held in Louisiana.<sup>138</sup>

Even in its last strongholds in Louisiana the American party was beginning to break up. In the New Orleans city election, June 7, 1860, there were three tickets in the field, American, Citizen, and Independent. The American ticket was as usual nominated by a previously called nominating convention.<sup>139</sup> The *Crescent* which had long played such a leading part in the party's history, refused to support the nominees<sup>140</sup> because "They were not fairly, nor justly, nor legally nominated by any rule or law or understanding that has prevailed with the American party since its formation. The trickery which characterized the election of the nominating delegates destroyed at once any claims their nomination might be supposed to have for support from either Americans, in a party sense, or as citizens . . . . The nominating delegates were not only in every sense illegally and wrongfully elected, but even had they been fairly chosen they were incompetent to make a choice of nominees for the American party, by reason of the fact that no incumbent of office can be qualified as a delegate, nor is any delegate eligible to office for twelve months after having acted in that capacity."<sup>141</sup>

The *Crescent* announced its support of the Citizen's ticket and worked actively in the campaign. It justified its course by saying that the best and purest parties that had ever existed had fallen into the hands of unscrupulous and designing men who had used them to gain prestige and fame for themselves. It believed that such a party must be short-lived and fall to pieces whenever that party was derelict to its duties.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>135</sup> *Constitutional*, Oct. 13, 1860; *National Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1859; *Sugar Planter*, Jan. 7, Feb. 18, 1860.

<sup>137</sup> Cooper and Fenton, *op. cit.*, bk. I, p. 87; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 11, 1860.

<sup>138</sup> *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, May 31, June 3, 1860; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 14, 29, 31, 1860; *Sugar Planter*, July 7, 1860.

<sup>139</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, April 17, 19, 1860.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, May 15, 1860.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, May 15, 1860.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, May 30, 1860.

The American candidate for Mayor was elected by a majority of 1,734 out of 7,593. The party also elected two recorders, one aldermen, and six assistant aldermen. The Citizens elected one recorder, three aldermen, three assistant aldermen, and the street commissioner.<sup>143</sup> Two Independent candidates for recorder and alderman were successful. It was hard to judge party strength by these figures, as several candidates received votes from the other parties.<sup>144</sup>

So ended the last election in Louisiana in which the American "party" participated. The new Constitutional Union party found most of the old Americans in its ranks. In many places the American clubs turned themselves bodily into Bell and Everett Clubs, Bell Ringers, Everett Rangers, Bell Clappers, Minute Men of 1860, Bell Knights, Union Guards, Bell Rangers, Bell Champions, Rough and Ready Clubs, Crittenden Guards, and Bunker Hill Rangers. Ex-American leaders and Unionists, such as Randell Hunt, Madison Day, T. J. Wells, C. Roselius, B. L. Hodge, B. Lacey, H. J. Hyams, and others led in the fight to preserve the Union.

Yet it should not be concluded that the Constitutional Union party was the American party in disguise.<sup>145</sup> The *Constitutional*, a paper recently founded in Alexandria, tried to rally support from the anti-Americans by attempting to prove that Breckinridge was intensely anti-foreign and nativistic.<sup>146</sup> Democrats who loved the Union more than party, and there were many, either joined the Constitutionalists or voted for Douglas. The popular vote of Louisiana in 1860 was, Breckinridge 22,681, Bell 20,204, and Douglas 7,625.<sup>147</sup> The results showed that those who opposed Breckinridge possessed more strength than the Americans had displayed in the previous state election, and it was centered in entirely different sections.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>143</sup> This office was bitterly contested as clean streets was the chief issue on the Citizens ticket.

<sup>144</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, May 30, 1860.

<sup>145</sup> The following papers which supported the Constitutional Unionists give an idea of its different composition.—*Red River American*, Alexandria; *Magnolia*, Iberville; *Constitutional*, Alexandria; *Messenger*, St. James; *Louisiana Signal*, New Orleans; *Sugar Planter*, West Baton Rouge; *Advocate*, Morehouse; *Opelousas Patriot*; *Jefferson Journal*; *Houma Civic Guard*; *Thibodaux Gazette*; *Union Bell*, St. Mary parish; *Miridionale*, Abbeville; *Shreveport Southwestern*; *Meschasebe*, St. Charles parish; *Central Organ*, Marksville; *Compti Times*; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*; *Courier du Teche*, St. Martinsville; *New Orleans Picayune*.

<sup>146</sup> *Constitutional*, Oct. 27 ff., 1860.

<sup>147</sup> *Tribune Almanac for the Years 1838-1868*, Vol. II, *Whig Almanac*, 1861, p. 37; *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Dec. 4, 1860.

<sup>148</sup> *Constitutional*, Nov. 24, 1860; *Baton Rouge Weekly Gazette and Comet*, Nov. 9, 1860.

The American party now ceased to exist. Its ideals had been high and its ultimate purposes noble, yet its career was not enviable. It was conceived and based on issues that could not receive more than temporary interest. It suffered from the same weaknesses as its predecessor—the Whig party. It was impossible for it to obtain national supremacy or permanency by disregarding the most vital and important question of the day—slavery. Then too, the existing corrupt and foul political conditions in New Orleans led the party to commit acts which made it vulnerable. Perhaps the words of Governor Wickliffe in his message to the Legislature in January, 1857, give a true evaluation of the party—"However attractive might have been its general theory of political rights, however pretentious its patriotism and pure its professions, the social evils that afflict New Orleans are as legitimate and logical sequences of its peculiar tenets, as if those evils had been the very aim and end of its existence."<sup>149</sup>

<sup>149</sup> *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, Jan. 21, 1857.

NOTE BY EDITOR OF QUARTERLY—The author's manuscript includes an appendix which could not be included with this installment. We are debating whether to publish the same and if it is not printed, the History ends with this installment.





## **RAPIDES PARISH, LOUISIANA—A HISTORY**

*By* G. P. WHITTINGTON

### **FIFTH INSTALLMENT**

(Continued from July, 1933, Quarterly)

#### **CHAPTER III\***

##### **DUELS AND FIGHTS**

**T**HE EARLY DAYS of this section, called Rapides, were not unlike other parts of the state in so far as duels and fights were concerned. Many have been forgotten, some are scarcely remembered, but the famous fight between the two factions on the sand bar near Natchez, Mississippi, has acquired a national reputation. The duel that preceeded this fight was without damage to either of the principals. The fight was between the seconds and friends of the men who had journeyed to that place to settle their differences. It occurred on September 19, 1827.

This fight did not take place within the borders of this parish, but in as much as all of the participants had their domicile within its limits and the differences that had come between them had their origin in Rapides, it seems but proper that we should tell something of this duel, the fight and the men who took part in it.

It is generally known that the site of the fight was on a sand bar formed by the Mississippi river within the limits of the parish of Concordia, only a few miles from Natchez. The men who were parties to the fight spent the previous night in Natchez and crossed the river the morning of the fight, and after the fight the wounded were carried back to Natchez to receive medical attention. The dead were buried in Vidalia, those who had escaped injury travelled back home after seeing to the welfare of their friends and in some cases relatives. Many in after years became close friends and allied in some cases by marriage.

During the early part of the 19th century when this country was being settled by people from all parts, who were seeking good land that could be purchased for a small sum and in many

\* From this chapter on we are using Mr. Whittington's first draft. His unfortunate death in August, 1932, deprives us of the benefit of his revision and of the authorities on which he bases the text.—Ed. LA. HIST. QY.

cases upon long terms of credit, speculation reached its height. Not alone the new settlers but those who had spent the better part of their lives within its limits sought to acquire and sell large tracts of land at a great profit. The banks at first were liberal in their advances, but in time the error of former transactions became evident and more conservative methods became the order of the day. The refusal of loans and notes seemed to be considered causes for challenges to be sent to the director who was considered to be responsible for the failure to obtain the advances or loan.

Another cause of differences was politics. There were two factions in Rapides. One was made up of the old residents and their friends and kinsmen, the other of the new comers. The last named party was in the ascendancy in 1826-1830, and they had succeeded in having one of their number named as Sheriff to succeed the late sheriff William Fristoe, a member of the older group.

To understand the sand bar fight it is necessary to know something of the men who participated and the differences that had come between them. The principal characters were James Bowie, General Samuel Cuny, and George C. McWhorters, followers of the Wells faction; Major Norris Wright, Colonel Robert A. Crain, Alfred Blanchard and Carey Blanchard, followers of the Maddox faction. It is not possible to account for the military titles given these different men but that is the way they were known and so the titles under which they paraded during their lives have been adopted.

As James Bowie is nationally known, something of his life must be told first and then that of his antagonist Norris Wright, for their stories touch each other in several places and one cannot be narrated without referring to the other.

James Bowie who is best known to the people of this generation for the story that is told of his death in the battle of the Alamo, and for his supposed making of the first "bowie knife" was born in Kentucky in 1796. His father was a native of Georgia and was temporarily living in Kentucky at the time of the birth of this man. Resin Bowie was somewhat of a wanderer, and in the next few years lived in Missouri, Catahoula parish and St. Landry. About 1814, when James Bowie was yet a minor he left his father's home and came to the parish of Rapides, acquired a tract of land on Bayou Boeuf and proceeded to cut the

timber away and make a farm out of his homestead. Of this period of his life many stories are told of his way of making a living and the sports indulged in. While living on Bayou Boeuf he came into contact with the younger generation of the Wells family (large planters) and formed a friendship that lasted during the remaining years of his life. The story is also told that he disposed of his property and entered into the business of smuggling slaves into Louisiana from Galveston, Texas, then the base of operation of Jean Lafitte and his men. The slaves were taken by Lafitte in his piratic raids on the high sea and brought to Galveston. There he offered them for sale and would let the purchaser use his own means of getting them within the United States. It has long been a tradition of this section that when Lafitte was making his headquarters at Barataria that he often brought slaves into central Louisiana and disposed of them to the prosperous planters who were ever-ready to buy a slave cheap. Bowie and his brother are said to have gone to Galveston, purchased the negroes from Lafitte at a price of one dollar per pound, loaded them on a schooner and sailed for the Louisiana coast. There the boat would be beached and abandoned. The nearest customs official was advised of the abandoned cargo of slaves, which would then be seized and sold by the official. The informer (Bowie) claimed the one-half usually received by such an agent. This part of the sales price of the slaves would be applied upon the bid made, and the cargo was then good merchandise to be carried throughout the state for sale. One of these caravans escaped and reached the neighboring Indians and was never recovered. From this class of business some \$65,000.00 was made and with this money Bowie entered upon a career of land speculation. Overflows and resulting failures of crops put Bowie into hard straits and as the banks had adopted a policy of restrictions on loans, he lost heavily. Norris Wright was one of the directors of one of the local banks, and to him was attributed the refusal of the bank to make large loans to Bowie and thus caused an enmity that finally resulted fatally to Wright.

Bowie was making his home in Alexandria. He was the follower of a faction lead by Wells. Norris Wright had been named as the Sheriff of Rapides to succeed William Fristoe who died in 1823. Fristoe had been a member of the same faction as Bowie. In the election of 1826, lines were closely drawn and a bitter campaign carried on. Much hard feeling grew out of the campaign. Wright and his faction were successful.



Norris Wright was from Baltimore. He came south to clerk in the store of Martin and Bryant, along with Robert C. Hynson, and when the old firm went out of business with the death of one of the members of the firm, Hynson and Wright took over the business which they conducted until 1825. Hynson became the cashier of the bank, Wright was the sheriff and one of the board of directors holding both positions at the time of his death.

Bowie was described as a powerful individual accustomed to out-door life, while Wright was slender of build and somewhat frail in appearance. Wright was cool and fearless, as was Bowie. He was noted as one of the best pistol shots in Rapides and had been one of the principals in several duels, in at least two of which he had killed the other party.

For some reason whether it was money matters or politics does not matter, these men had a difficulty in Alexandria, in which Bowie was shot by Wright, the bullet glanced and though wounded Bowie was able to take Wright's gun away from him and severely handle his opponent. It is even said that had not the fight been stopped Wright would have been killed by Bowie with bare hands. Bowie never forgot a friend nor forgave an enemy. The difficulties of his friends were his troubles. His friends, the Wells, were parties to a duel and he was present on the sand-bar as a friend.

In the Natchez fight Bowie was desperately wounded and was carried to town with the expectation that he would die by morning. He recovered and returned to this section, but the fight and its results were not looked upon with favor here and as soon as possible he disposed of his property both lands and slaves and sought a new home across the Sabine in Texas. In his new home he married the daughter of a former Governor of the province, children were born and apparently he was contented. Then the wife and children died, the war between Texas and Mexico began and Bowie took up the fight of his adopted state. The story of his death at the Alamo is too well known to be re-told.

Contrary to the general belief the knife that was known as the "bowie knife" was not designed by him but, by a brother Resin Bowie. The actual work of making the knife was done by a plantation blacksmith named Snowden. The Bowies claimed that the first time this knife was used in any fight was in the duel about to be described.

Colonel Robert A. Crain, another of the sand bar combatants was a native of Virginia and had moved to Louisiana making his home on Bayou Rapides near the present Boyce. He seems to have been the type always ready to fight. A question whether he would pay a bill that he had contracted was sufficient cause to take part in a combat. He had killed Dr. John Rippy because Rippy would not accept his note in payment of the rent due on a plantation. It seems that he was never tried for this killing. He was indicted for carrying out of the state negroes belonging to Levin Luckett. Luckett became his son-in-law and the case was dropped, but it was necessary for the legislature to pass a bill authorizing the abandonment of this case before the District Attorney would discontinue it. Crain prevailed upon Richmond E. Cuny to endorse his note for a considerable sum of money. The note was not paid when due and the maker and endorser were sued. It seems that Crain was execution proof and Cuny was compelled to sell some of his slaves to meet this obligation. This was the cause of some trouble between Crain and General Samuel Cuny, a son of Richmond E. Cuny. Crain refused to pay the note, a fight resulted and Crain was wounded by Cuny. Cuny shot him with a shot gun, inflicting a very dangerous wound in the right arm. The Cunys were close friends of the Wells family. Both families had resided in St. Landry and moved from that section to Rapides. Levi Wells was the guardian of the Cuny children. Nothing further is known of Cuny. Crain returned after the Natchez episode to Rapides and seems to have become a peaceful citizen, and died surrounded by his family. In later years Crain and Bowie met and made up as far as their differences were concerned and parted as good friends, Bowie going to Texas where he was killed, Crain to the home of his family.

Alfred Blanchard and his brother Carey Blanchard were also from Virginia and had settled on the upper end of Rapides Bayou or Bayou Jean de Jean. In time the Crain and Blanchard families intermarried. Alfred Blanchard while under the influence of liquor wounded Thomas Jefferson Wells, but not seriously. The cause cannot be learned at this time. Wells, was a brother of General Montfort Wells, Samuel L. Wells and James Madison Wells. He was a large planter on Boeuf. In after years he was elected to the legislature on the Whig Ticket and was the candidate for governor against Thomas Overton Moore in 1859. McWhorters was from Catahoula parish. He was Wells' second. In after years he was state treasurer.

These men with Doctors Cuny and Denny had met on the sand bar as seconds, surgeons and friends of Dr. Thomas H. Maddox and Samuel L. Wells who were to be engaged in a duel. Dr. Maddox was a native of Maryland, educated in Edinburgh, and after practicing his profession for a short time in his native state came to Rapides where he entered upon the practice of medicine with Dr. Robert H. Sibley. He was very successful and in a short time had built up a very large clientele among the better class of people. The doctor was given to gossiping with his patients and this was the foundation of his difficulty with Wells. It would seem that the good doctor repeated the conversation of a lady patient, who having discovered that the gossip she had passed on would likely cause trouble got in touch with Maddox and bound him to secrecy as to his authority. He stood fast and declined to tell General Monfort Wells the name of the lady. A few days later Wells meeting Maddox on the public road attempted to get what he considered satisfaction by the use of a shot gun. Wells was a bad shot, missed Maddox and hit another man. Wells in due time was challenged to fight a duel, but for some reason declined the challenge. Crain offered to take the place of Maddox, with like results. When the two challenges had been declined, Crain informed Wells that since they would not fight a duel that his party would make it a street fight the first time Wells came to town. Samuel Levi Wells a brother of the General and a bachelor agreed to take the place of his brother and accepted the challenge. The first place named for the duel was Burr's Ferry on the Sabine river in what was long known as the neutral strip. General Walter H. Overton a friend to both parties objected to the location, stating that if they insisted upon fighting at the Ferry none of the parties would ever return home. After much ado about where the fight would take place, the sand bar opposite Natchez was selected and both parties journeyed to Natchez to spend the night before the duel. In the Wells party were Thomas Jefferson Wells, James Bowie, General Samuel Cuny, McWhorters, and the surgeon Dr. Cuny. In the other party was Norris Wright, Robert A. Crain, the Blanchard brothers, and Dr. Denny the surgeon. Both parties were ferried across the river. It was agreed that the principals were to be accompanied on the field by the seconds and the physicians, and that the friends were to remain a half mile away from the scene of action. The principals took their places and exchanged shots, both missing.



The pistols were reloaded and discharged and both principals again were unharmed. Then Wells offered his apology which was readily accepted by Maddox and the party started for a grove of willows where refreshment had been provided to pledge new made peace. About this time Cuny and Bowie had come on to the field in violation of the agreement and as the principals were walking out, Cuny called to Crain that then and there was a good time to settle their little difference, at the same time drawing a pistol. Crain turned and fired at Bowie who was with Cuny. Bowie was struck in the hip, Crain in the fleshy part of the arm. Dr. Cuny tried to prevent his brother from going into the fight and for a time forceably held him, but finally freeing himself he started back at Crain who now fired his remaining pistol, mortally wounding General Cuny. Bowie had not been disabled and drawing his knife advanced upon Crain. When Bowie was within reach of Crain, Crain struck Bowie over the head with his pistol used as a club. As Crain retreated, his friend Norris Wright came upon the scene and attacked Bowie with a sword cane. Bowie was already wounded and bleeding. He attempted to ward off the sword cane, but failed. It struck him in the breast striking the bone and breaking off. Wright was near enough for Bowie to reach him with one of his hands, and gripping him like a vice he stabbed him to death with his knife. In some way Alfred Blanchard was wounded by a pistol ball. This ended the duel and the fight. A friend on either side was dead, two of the other friends of Maddox were wounded. Neither of the principals to the duel had been touched. Wright and Cuny were buried in Vidalia. Bowie was taken to Natches where he recovered. The others returned home.

After returning home Samuel L. Wells contracted some of the fevers that prevailed in this section at that time and died shortly thereafter. Dr. Maddox lived to be near ninety years of age.

It is not necessary to recount the other duels that took place in Rapides. They were nothing to be proud of.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Authorities used, Debow, Vol. 13, La. Dem. T.-D. Letters of Maddox, J. M. Wells, and Niece of Bowie. See also Calhoun's History of Concordia Parish, La. Hist. Qy. 15, 1932, Chapter X, pp. 638-643.

## CHAPTER IX.

## SLAVERY AND SLAVE INSURRECTIONS

WHEN O'Reilly sent his agents into Rapides in 1769 to administer the oath of allegiance to the French living in that section, they were also charged with the duty of making a census or inventory of the people, slaves, live stock, etc. In their report it is recited that the settlers owned some eighteen negro slaves. This is the first mention to be found of slaves in this section. The exact date when they were first brought into Rapides cannot be definitely stated. In 1792 there were nearly two hundred and at the time of the Louisiana Purchase this number had increased to one thousand. With the coming of the Americans and the successful growing of cotton and sugar cane the number greatly increased until at the beginning of the war of 1861 there was said to be some 15,358 slaves in the parish, and 291 free colored people, the whites numbering only 9,711.

The majority of the slave-owners lived along the river and bayous, or on the alluvial lands. Some few were owned by the people in what was known as the Bayou Boeuf pinewoods. These people were the descendents of the unfortunate planters who had lost their alluvial lands and were compelled to seek new homes on cheap lands. Some of the residents who lived in town owned their domestic servants. Rapides was not a section of large individual holdings of slaves, the average number being about five per family. Some only owned one, while in a few cases the number would reach one hundred and more. The man who owned only one or two slaves worked with them in the field or at other work that had to be done. The planter who owned a number of slaves employed an overseer to look after the field work and to see that the negroes were properly handled.

It was the policy of the planter to look after the health of his slaves and in ordinary cases he would act as his own doctor. However a regular physician was employed to visit these people and take care of the sick. The wife of the planter saw to the nursing using some old negro woman for this purpose. During the summer months the planters along the river and bayou would send the family home in the pinewoods to get them away from the fevers that visited this section almost annually. With the family were sent the negro children and the colored women who were unable to work. Only the men and women who were capable of

doing a days work were retained on the plantation under the care and charge of the husband or manager. At these summer homes of the planter a building was erected to house these young slaves, special arrangements being made for the cooking of their meals. The young children were under the care of some old negro Mammy who not only looked after their physical well-being but was also charged with the duty of controlling them. The negroes of the small slave owner were usually loyal to their master and his family, but this was not the rule where the ownership was such that a manager or overseer was employed.

The slaves in Rapides came from many sources. Some from Virginia and the older slaveholding states, some were smuggled into the state directly from Africa and others were the products of the sales made by Lafitte at Galveston and Barataria. It has always been understood that a number of these slaves were brought to this section by the Lafittes or their followers and sold to the planters at prices much less than slaves that passed through regular channels could be acquired. A few freemen of color lived in this section and were the owners of some few negroes. There were not as many here as in the adjoining parishes of Natchitoches and Avoyelles.

In the summer of 1837 the negro slaves on the plantations near Cheneyville with the assistance of several free negroes attempted an uprising with the result that their plans were discovered. Nine negroes were legally hung as well as some three free negroes. The scheme, that had been under consideration for some time, was to form a company of slaves with the necessary arms and ammunition to kill off the white men, women and children and make their way to Texas. Corn and food had been gathered together back of the plantations and even mules and wagons had been provided and they were only waiting for the day agreed upon. A negro named Lewis Cheney (the last name being assumed on account of ownership) gave the information to his owner. The negroes claimed that Lewis was the leader, the man who had been doing most of the talking, but he was above the ordinary in intelligence and when he feared that their plan would or had been discovered saved himself by giving the information that lead to the arrest of the other slaves. The state authorized his purchase and freeing, provided he was sent out of the parish.



The excitement was so great that for some time a company of volunteers were maintained in the Cheneyville territory for the protection of the whites.

"Niles Register of October 28th 1837, has the following to say:—

"On the 18th instant intelligence was received at New Orleans that the negroes in a portion of the Parish of Rapides near Alexandria, had projected an insurrection. One account says it was divulged and frustrated as follows: "A slave of a planter, Mr. Compton, informed his master that the negroes were forming plans to kill all the white males and spare the females and children, and that if he would go to a certain meeting house, where his negroes assembled for the purpose of preaching, he would discover all their plans. Mr. Compton did go in company with four others but learned very little more of the matter. His informer then told him that the ringleader of the gang was one of his own slaves, and that he had sworn revenge against his master for taking him out of the house and sending him to the field. The plan of this fellow, it appears was to raise an insurrection at Alexandria, next at Natchitoches, and then to turn steps to New Orleans and kill all the whites. The negroes, however, could not agree, which frustrated all their plans. One party was for sparing the women and children; the other for an indiscriminate massacre. Mr. Compton, upon learning these facts, arrested his house servant, the chief, and he confessed on the gallows that it had been his intention to kill his master.

On the 10th and 12th (August) instant, nine were hung and thirty others were taken and imprisoned. It is hoped that all their plans will be discovered. A strong patrol and guard is constantly kept up by day and night, and confidence is continued.

Besides the slaves, three free negroes have been hung, and it was intended to drive away all free persons of color.

Two companies of United States troops had been stationed throughout the disaffected district. Everything was quiet and the negroes completely subdued."<sup>24</sup>

According to the acts of the Legislature that authorized paying for the slaves legally executed, Samuel Cakford owned two; John Pettway owned one, Carter Beaman owned two; John Compton owned one and Vincent Page one. The same act authorized "that the sum of \$1500.00 be paid David Cheney on his warrant as

<sup>24</sup> Niles Register, Vol. 53, p. 129. October 28, 1837. Northup (Solomon) Twelve Years a Slave, p. 246. Act of 1838, No. 115, Sec. 2.

the value of the man Lewis, who discovered the conspiracy among the slaves in the parish of Rapides in the year 1837, on his emancipating the said slave. That on the emancipating of said negro Lewis there shall be paid him out of the money in the treasury the sum of \$500.00 to enable him to leave the state and provide for his security."

This was the end of the attempted insurrection, but it was not the end of the unrest among the slaves in that section or in the parish as a whole and until the end of slavery there was always a fear that there would be an uprising among the slaves and that the white people would be killed.

This condition was heightened by the news of the John Brown Raid into Virginia in 1859. Just after this time an overseer on the Flint-Casson Plantation above Alexandria was killed by one of the slaves. A number of these people were arrested and placed in the parish jail and the next morning it was found that the jail had been raided and all of the negroes lynched. The owners and their heirs always contended that there was only one guilty party in the number hung, and that he had something on his side.

During the war there was some trouble with the negroes in this section and specially after the first Federal Invasion. Some of the negroes who stayed behind forgot their places and for a time trouble was feared. The greater part of the able bodied slaves followed the army on its retreat. The few faithful remained loyal until after the war was over.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup>See the writer's paper "Concerning the loyalty of slaves in North Louisiana in 1863," *La. Hist. Qy.*, Vol. 14, pp. 487-491.—Ed. *La. Hist. Qy.*

(To be Continued)



## THE INTERREGNUM IN LOUISIANA IN 1861.

The Course of Events in the State from November, 1860,  
to April, 1861.

By LANE CARTER KENDALL, M. A.

### THIRD INSTALLMENT.

(Continued from July, 1933, Quarterly)

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### LOUISIANA FUNCTIONS AS A NATION

ON THE following Tuesday, January 29, the state convention met, not in Baton Rouge, but in New Orleans, to which place it had adjourned, because of the inconvenience attending the housing of so many delegates in the smaller town. The scene is described thus:

.... The City Hall was crowded yesterday morning with the interested as well as the curious. For several days past the sound of the hammer in Lyceum Hall, the public assembly room on the third floor of the City Hall building, gave note of the busy preparations going on to prepare it for the deliberations of the Convention. The committees of the Common Council appointed to superintend this work had but a short time, after learning of the acceptance by the Convention of our city's invitation, in which to make their arrangements. Hence the Hall was not ready for the sitting at ten o'clock yesterday morning, and a mutual understanding was circulated that there should be a postponement of two hours.

Around and within the City Hall there was great commotion, a hurrying to and fro of men, considerable animated conversation, and some inexubrant excitement. It was a great event—this assemblage of citizens entrusted by the great body of our people with the control of our State's destiny—and the importance of the occasion appeared to be impressively felt by all who were attracted to the place. The galleries and the space behind the rail-



ing in Lyceum Hall were crowded with spectators at an early hour. Among them we noticed several ladies. The pelican flag was floating from the top of the City Hall.<sup>1</sup>

It was peculiarly appropriate that the opening session of the Convention in New Orleans should have been blessed with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Benjamin M. Palmer. Louisiana had become a separate governmental entity, and no small part of the responsibility for this result was due to this eloquent and courageous minister.

Since the state had seceded, the next most important consideration was the appointment or election of delegates to the Southern convention. John Perkins, Jr., as chairman of that committee, reported an ordinance to that effect:

An ordinance to provide for the appointment of delegates to a Convention to form a Southern Confederacy.

We, the people of Louisiana, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained:

1st. That this Convention will on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of January instant, at the hour of 12 M proceed to elect by ballot six delegates, two from the State at large and one from each Congressional District, to represent this State in the Convention of Seceding States proposed to be held at Montgomery, in the State of Alabama, on the fourth day of February, 1861, for the purpose of securing concerted and harmonious action and also of forming a Provisional Government for those States which have seceded and which may secede and unite to form a Southern Confederacy.

2nd. That the said delegates be instructed to aid in forming a Provisional Government on the basis of the Constitution of the United States for such States as have seceded or may secede, to be established and put into operation before the fourth day of March 1861 and that the same Convention of Seceding States shall proceed forthwith to consider and propose a Constitution and plan for a Permanent Government for such States, which proposed plan shall be referred back to the Several State Conventions for their adoption or rejection.

3rd. That this Convention accepts the recommendation of the State of South Carolina that each State be entitled to one vote in the said Convention upon all questions which may be voted upon therein: and that each State send as many delegates as are equal to the number of Senators (sic) and Representatives to which it was entitled in the Congress of the United States.

<sup>1</sup> *Bee*, January 30, 1861.

4th. That if from any cause the said Convention should not assemble at the time and place above mentioned then, and in that event, the said delegates be, and they are hereby accredited to any Convention of Seceding States which may meet at any other time and place having for its object the formation of a Government and establishing of a Southern Confederacy as herein before prescribed, and which may adjourn to meet at any other time and place.<sup>2</sup>

Perkins' ordinance was ordered to be printed and made the special order of business for four o'clock that afternoon.

The following letter, in which the election of delegates to the Montgomery convention was urged, was then read by Perkins:

Baton Rouge  
Jan 25, 1861

*Hon. A. Mouton,  
President of the Convention.*

Sir: Permit us to correct an omission on our part in addressing the Convention in one particular. The States of So. Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, Florida and Mississippi have named the 4<sup>th</sup> day of Feb. 1861 as the time for the assemblage of the Convention of the States which have and may dissolve their connection with the Government of the United States and the place, Montgomery Ala. Many important questions will necessarily come up immediately upon the assemblage of that body, for its consideration upon which it will be very desirable for the State of Louisiana to be heard and her influence felt and recognized. It is of paramount importance that many measures shall be acted on with all the dispatch possible.

Prominent amongst others will be an early communication with foreign nations and a consequent recognition by them of the new Confederacy.

Allow us to express a hope that should the State of Louisiana place herself in line with the States which have announced their purpose of forming a southern Confederacy, she may appreciate the imperious importance of having her voice heard at the very commencement of the deliberations of the Southern Convention and that delegates be appointed by the Convention over which you preside in time to meet us.

Very Respectfully,  
Your Obt. Servt.

JOHN A. WINSTON  
JOHN L. MANNING<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Journal, pp. 44-45.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 45-46.

One of the delegates to the Convention was Thomas J. Semmes of Orleans. He was, throughout the life of the convention, the most persistent in his demand that the house be cleared and the assembly go into secret session, of the entire membership. Later in the history of that body, it was proposed that all secret sessions be done away with, except when two-thirds of the membership voted in favor of the motion. Semmes fought the measure stubbornly, and was victorious. It seems curious that one man should have been so anxious to hide his remarks from the public. In the absence of the records of the secret sessions, the inference may be drawn either that Semmes voted or talked in such ways that he was afraid that his political future would be damaged if his words should become known to the general public or that public opinion might be aroused in antagonism to his own views of the necessities of the times.

The Rules governing the Convention provided that the Secretary should keep the minutes of the secret sessions separate from the minutes of the public sessions, and that the secret minutes should not be given to the printer until the injunction of secrecy would be removed by resolution of the Convention, which does not appear to have ever been done. We have not been able to find the manuscript copy of the secret minutes.

According to the Journal, "Mr. Semmes then moved as Chairman of the Committee on Commerce and Navigation that the doors of the Convention be closed before the reading of the report, which was carried." Later that same day, "Mr. Semmes moved that the house be cleared and that the Convention go into secret session, which was adopted."

In the evening session, the ordinance submitted earlier in the day by Perkins was taken up, section by section. There were three different amendments submitted for the first section, which were all ordered laid on the table. A real debate, however, did not develop until the following day, when Herron suggested that the words "by ballot" be stricken out, and "viva voce" put in their stead. For some reason, there seemed to be a great deal of sentiment over this proposition, but it was all on the same side—that the only way to elect the delegates to the Montgomery convention was by open ballot. It seems apparent, from an examination of the newspapers, that no one wanted, attached to his name, the onus of having supported such a proposal, and so everyone was anxious to get up and make his position known. As a



matter of record, the amendment was accepted unanimously. With this change, seemingly of minor but evidently of major importance, if we judge from the debate on it, the entire ordinance was approved as submitted.

Another interesting sidelight on the convention's members is furnished by the resolution introduced by Laurence to the effect that each man be supplied with eight copies of such daily papers, "or their equivalent in weeklys," as may have been selected by him. This was eventually modified, so that only five copies were allowed, but even then it seems strange that the publicity craze should have been so great that each member wanted that many of the papers published each day in the state. The fact is another indication of the extravagance which characterized the entire session of the convention.

It was but natural that the people of the city—and probably of the state at large—should have been interested in the selection of the delegates to the Montgomery convention. said the *Bee*:

Now that the Convention is about to resume its labors, we should rejoice to see all former party lines and differences obliterated, and we hope that in the selection of delegates to the Montgomery Convention, the example of Georgia will be imitated by our own Convention. Although composed of an overwhelming majority of Immediate Secessionists, several of the leading men on the Co-operative side—such as Hill, Stephens, and others—were chosen to represent Georgia at Montgomery. We trust and believe that such men as Bush, Roman, Herron and Garrett will not be wholly set aside and ignored by their colleagues; that none but men thoroughly identified with Louisiana, either by birth or long residence in the State, and whose large interests in and entire devotion to Louisiana cannot be questioned, will be selected to fill offices of such high trust and honor. Let all mere party hacks, politicians and wire pullers be set aside, and let the solid men of Louisiana—the true representatives of her gallant and patriotic population—be selected. We have already alluded to some of the most distinguished gentlemen who were elected on the Co-operation ticket. On the other side there are a host (sic) of talented and highly respectable men who would do honor to the State in any position, and from whom a very strong delegation might be selected. When such men as Judge Perkins, P. E. Bonford, Alexander Declouet, J. K. Elgee, J. G. Oliver, D. F. Kenner, C. M. Conrad, and a host of other equally distinguished candidates are before the Convention, there will be no excuse for the appointment of persons of

inferior calibre and limited experience. In the important labor of forming a Constitution for the South, Louisiana should be represented by the most able, enlightened and faithful of her sons.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, John Slidell, who was perhaps the most powerful "boss" Louisiana ever had up to that time, had conceived the idea that all of the delegates to the Montgomery convention should be elected from the State at large. He nominated his ticket, to the disgust of the *Daily True Delta*:

Mr. John Slidell, whose mandates have the force of irresistible edicts over certain organizations in this state, has, we hear, in addition to the movements already pre-ordered by him, nominated the following ticket to represent Louisiana in the convention of seceding states at Montgomery, Alabama:

JOHN SLIDELL  
J. P. BENJAMIN  
F. H. HATCH  
E. LAURENCE  
W. R. MILES  
T. J. SEMMES

The ratification or rejection of this ticket by the convention this day, will be in some measure a test of whether Louisiana is owned and disposed of by Mr. John Slidell, or is in reality a free, sovereign and independent commonwealth.<sup>5</sup>

In the session of the convention of January 30, the call for the special order of the day, which was the election of the six delegates, was made by Martin. Walker moved that the first representatives to be voted on should be from the state at large. This motion was carried, and the nominations were then made.

Walker nominated John Perkins, Jr., of Madison. Dorsey proposed Judah P. Benjamin, of New Orleans. When the latter nomination was made, the protest from the galleries was so uproarious that the president of the convention threatened to have that part of the house cleared if the hissing were not stopped. This had the desired effect. When quiet had been restored, McNeely put up the name of W. R. Miles, of New Orleans. Conner of Concordia supported Alexander DeClouet, of St. Martin parish.

<sup>4</sup> *Bee*, January 29, 1861.

<sup>5</sup> *Daily True Delta*, January 30, 1861.

Butler made the final nomination—John Slidell, of New Orleans. Thereupon bedlam again broke loose in the galleries, so that one of the members asked the president to direct that order be preserved, and that the deliberations of the convention proceed uninterrupted by the expression of the personal prejudices of the visitors.

The recapitulation of the vote sheds an interesting light on the popularity of Slidell's ticket:

Mr. Perkins .....	97
Mr. DeClouet .....	73
Mr. Benjamin .....	29
Mr. Miles .....	37
Mr. Slidell .....	9

The total voting strength of the Convention was 126, and Messrs. Perkins of Madison and DeClouet, having received a majority of all the votes cast, they were declared duly elected delegates from the State at Large.\*

Charles M. Conrad was nominated by Lewis of Orleans as a representative from the first district. Charles Gayarré was proposed by Wiltz. The former was elected, receiving 84 votes, the latter, 36, with two scattering ballots recorded—one for Benjamin, and one for Laurence.

Duncan F. Kenner, politician, lawyer, race-horse fancier,\* was nominated by Tappan to represent the second district; Semmes proposed U. R. Adams of New Orleans, and Estlin suggested Dan. W. Adams, also of New Orleans. Kenner was declared elected when it was found that he had received 92 votes, D. W. Adams, 14, and U. R. Adams, 13. Mouton, the president cast his vote for Taylor of St. Charles, who was the son of old Zachary Taylor, the veteran of the Mexican War.

Edward Sparrow was the only nominee to represent the third district, and was declared unanimously elected.

For the fourth district representatives, the following candidates were nominated: B. U. Pearce, of Bienville, by Lewis of Bienville; J. K. Elgee, by Dorsey; Henry Marshall of DeSoto, by Elam; B. L. Hodge, of Caddo, by Moore. The convention proceeded

\* Journal, p. 52.

\* Note by Editor of the Quarterly. Mr. Kenner is entitled to a better description of his career than is accorded in this sweeping rather cynical generalization. His biography has never been written, but a careful study of his career would rank him high among the men of his period.



to vote. After the first ballot, Elgee's name was withdrawn. On the second ballot, Pearce's name was cancelled, and the delegates proceeded to a third and final ballot, by which Marshall was declared the victor over Hodge, receiving 62 votes to 54.<sup>7</sup>

Even the election of delegates to the Montgomery convention which was obviously a revolutionary body, did not bring home to the secessionists the realization that the action of the states in withdrawing from the Union was liable to precipitate a national calamity. The possible effect of such action on trade was shown in the following dispatch which was sent from Washington to New Orleans:

The effect of the disunion movements will enter into the discussion (of Congress). It is among the novelties of trade that one effect of the secession movements at Charleston, Mobile and New Orleans is to send cotton, even for foreign export, by the interior from Tennessee, Louisiana, Alabama, and other southern states, via New York, to France and London, as well as to New England and the interior towns of New York. New Orleans and Mobile can hardly have realized the practical effects of secession upon their trade and commerce, or they would not have been so eager for separation.<sup>7</sup>

As New Orleans had been an important seaport, through which most of the Mississippi valley trade passed, there were several buildings in the city belonging to the United States. With the secession of Louisiana, there arose the interesting and important question, as to what should be done with those structures which had not been already seized. The most valuable of these was, of course, the Mint. It was also a sub-treasury of the United States, a fact that proved a great incentive to those who were desirous of procuring it for the state. During the secret session of January 29, the following ordinance was introduced by Semmes:

An ordinance relative to the Revenues collected at the port of New Orleans.

Sec. 1 That the revenues collected, or to be collected, at the port of New Orleans, are held in trust by the State of Louisiana, and shall be kept separate and apart from all other funds.

<sup>7</sup> All the delegates to Montgomery were secessionists except Marshall.

<sup>7</sup> *Daily True Delta*, January 30, 1861.

Sec. 2. That the Governor, and he alone, is hereby authorized to draw his warrants on the depository of said funds, to pay such expenses of the Mint in New Orleans, upon the estimates of the proper officers, as have been heretofore authorized by the laws and regulations of the United States.

Sec. 3. That all accounts connected with said service, as well as of said Mint, as heretofore rendered to Federal authorities, be rendered to, and adjusted by the Governor, who is hereby authorized and required to take proper bonds, with sureties, of said officers, for the proper discharge of their duties.

Sec. 4. That all accounts heretofore rendered by the Federal officers in this state to the Federal authority, be hereafter rendered in the manner prescribed by the laws and regulations of the United States unto the Governor of this State.<sup>8</sup>

After the delegates to the Montgomery convention were elected, the question arose as to whether they should be allowed to go to that meeting without any instructions or whether they should be authorized to act only in certain clearly defined fields. When the Louisiana convention was called to order on January 31, every member realized that there would be some discussion of that matter. The first man to talk on the subject was Norton, who introduced a fairly comprehensive ordinance, limiting the powers of the representatives to Montgomery. This was, however, ordered tabled.

The whole discussion must have lasted about two or three hours, and centered around the question of the re-opening of the African slave-trade. Walker offered a resolution which was to take the place of the previously tabled motion introduced by Norton, which had been to the effect that the convention was unalterably opposed to the reopening of the trade, and that, if possible, a clause should be inserted in the new constitution to prohibit forever the introduction of slaves in any foreign country, province or state after January 1862. Walker's resolution was as follows:

*Resolved*, that in voting to lay upon the table the resolution offered by the delegate from New Orleans, Mr. M. O. H. Norton, relative to the Slave trade, this Convention does not mean to express any opinion on the subject of said resolutions, but declines to give any instructions, touching that or other subjects to the delegates elected to the Montgomery Convention.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in *Daily Picayune*, February 2, 1861.

<sup>9</sup> *Journal*, pp. 63-64.

There were several substitutes offered for this, but the original resolution was finally adopted. Roselius then moved that the delegates be given their credentials by Mouton, which was passed, and the opportunity to limit the functions of these men was definitely closed.

Immediately after this it was announced that the commissioner from the free state of Louisiana to the state of Texas was to be Williamson of Caddo parish. This was the first appointment of any diplomatic representative to a foreign nation which was made by the newly-constituted sovereignty, and marks Louisiana as a definitely independent power.

The question of the public lands of Louisiana was so vital that a special standing committee was appointed to deal with it. J. K. Elgee was made chairman by the president.

Since New Orleans was on the river, the question arose as to whether the Pelican republic should have a navy. There were two steamers in the port of New Orleans, the *Marquis de Habana* and the *General Miramon*, which were offered for sale to the state of Louisiana. The committee on military affairs was instructed to investigate and report as soon as possible on the advisability of procuring these ships for the Louisiana navy.

A report from the committee on state constitution and protection of private rights was brought up and adopted. It is as follows:

We, the people of the State of Louisiana, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain and it is hereby declared and ordained,

1st. That article thirty-fourth of the Constitution be and the same is hereby repealed.

2nd. That article thirty-sixth of the Constitution be altered so as to read as follows, to wit: No person shall be eligible to the Office of Governor, or Lieutenant Governor who shall not have attained the age of twenty-eight years, and been a citizen and a resident within the State for the space of four years next preceding his election.

3rd. That article thirty-nine of the Constitution be and the same is hereby repealed.

4th. That article forty-six of the Constitution be altered so as to read as follows, to wit: He shall be Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of this State and of the Militia thereof.



5th. That article one hundred and twenty-six be altered so as to read as follows, to wit: Any citizen of this State who shall, after the adoption of the Ordinance of Secession of the State of Louisiana from the Federal Union, fight a duel with deadly weapons, with a citizen of this State or send or accept a challenge to fight a duel with deadly (weapons) with either within (sic) the State or out of it, with a citizen of this State, or who shall act as second or knowingly aid or assist in any manner those thus offending, shall be deprived of holding any office of profit or trust, or of enjoying the right of suffrage under this Constitution; and the office of any State Office, member of the General Assembly, or any person holding office of profit or trust under this Constitution, and the laws made in pursuance thereof shall be, "ipso facto" vacated by the fact of any such person committing the offense mentioned in this article, and the Legislature shall provide by Law for the ascertaining and declaration of such forfeiture.

6th. That Article one hundred and twenty-seven be altered so as to read as follows, to wit: None of the lands heretofore granted by the Congress of the United States to the State of Louisiana for aiding it in constructing the necessary levees and drains to reclaim the swamp and overflowed lands in this State, shall be diverted from the purpose for which they were granted, except for arming and defending the State.<sup>10</sup>

The following extract from the *Picayune's* account of the proceedings is of interest, because it shows a lighter side of the convention:

"Resolved, That we, the people of the State of Louisiana, in convention assembled, do hereby abolish that legislative body known as the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana."

Mr. Cannon prefaced the introduction of this resolution by some very witty and telling remarks, for which he is celebrated, and which convulsed the audience with laughter.

He denied intending to cast any reflections on the honorable members of the Legislature of Louisiana. That was not the object of his head or heart. His object was "Peace on earth, and good will toward men." He would state that he was a novice in legislative assemblies, and as a modest man, would say that this was the first time he ever was entrapped in such a snare, called a convention, and he prayed the prayer of his infancy, "Now I lay me down to sleep," &c., to protect him from all harm, danger, evil and

<sup>10</sup> *Journal*, pp. 74-75.

peril that might attend or await him from the infliction of long winded buncombe speeches. (Roars of laughter.)

He had been frequently asked whether this convention intended to pass a stay law? Now, he had been elected to this convention on a rushing principle, which was like the foaming track left behind the steamships, and he expected other members to follow in his wake. (Continued laughter.) He would not believe that this convention would dishonor the State by the enactment of a stay-law. He was a lawyer by profession and it would be ruination to his practice and taking the bread out of his mouth. He had been sent here to clean out the Augean stables, and he thought the first act of the convention should have been, after the passage of the secession ordinance, to abolish the Legislature. (Sensation and great merriment.) He would therefore move the adoption of his resolution.

Mr. Moore said he expected that the object for which the resolution had been introduced had been attained, and he would now move to lay it on the table, which motion prevailed.<sup>11</sup>

On February 4, the motion of Davidson of Sabine, that two armed vessels be purchased for the navy of the state of Louisiana, was unfavorably reported by Taylor of St. Charles the chairman of the committee on military and naval affairs, to whom the matter had been referred. The details of this report are lacking, but apparently the ships were not worth the money asked.

The following report was submitted at the session of the following day:

The undersigned committee appointed by the Convention to take an inventory of Public Property in the hands of the Officers of the late Federal Government within the Parish of Orleans on the 1st Feb., 1861, beg leave to report that they have examined and counted the Sub-Treasury's vault at the Mint the sum of four hundred and eighty three thousand nine hundred and eighty three dollars and 95/100 in gold and silver coin now in the custody of A. J. Guirot, an Officer of the State of Louisiana, and they would further report that in the treasury of the Mint they find the sum of One hundred and one thousand seven hundred and forty five 81/100 dollars and copper coin. In possession of Dr. M. F. Bouzans, melter and refiner, the sum of one hundred and forty three thousand, six hundred and eighty nine 80/100 dollars in gold and silver bullion making an aggregate of \$418,311 52/100 in the Mint proper in the custody

<sup>11</sup> *Daily Picayune*, February 2. 1861.

of A. J. Guirot, Treasurer. It is proper further to state that of the said sum in the Mint, \$389,267 46/100 is regarded as the permanent bullion fund, \$249,926 68/100 is reported as due to individual depositors; the remaining \$4051 and 38 cents is the accumulated profit on coinage, the sum of which profit has heretofore been annually withdrawn from the Mint proper and deposited in the vault of the sub-treasury.

M. O. H. NORTON, Chairman  
J. SOMPEYRAC  
FELIX LABATUT  
SID H. GRIFFIN<sup>12</sup>

Speaking of the seizure of the Mint, the Daily Crescent carried the following editorial:

Having dissolved our connection with the late Federal Government, and having declared the State of Louisiana a free and independent Commonwealth for the time being, the Convention proceeded to provide for contingencies, as they might arise by beginning the work of reconstruction at once. Accordingly, the jurisdiction of the State, and an extension of the laws of the United States over certain important departments were adopted; and the President of the Convention, pursuant to the directions of that body, proceeded to take possession of the Mint and Custom-House, and all the coin, bullion and other property therein contained belonging or supposed to belong to the late Federal Government. The officers of the Mint and Custom-House have forwarded their resignations to Washington—have taken the oath of Allegiance to Louisiana—and have, we presume, ere this, executed bonds in favor of the Governor, guaranteeing the faithful and honest discharge of the trusts confided to their keeping. The operations of the Mint will continue as heretofore; and our able and experienced Collector, Hon F. H. Hatch, clears vessels as regularly and safely under the authority of the Republic of Louisiana, as he formerly did by and with the authority of the recent Republic of the United States. So far, no interruption of business has taken place, and none will take place in the future, we are entirely persuaded. The Collector's clearances are certified to by the respective foreign consuls, so far as the vessels of their governments are concerned, and no Abolition authority, no matter how much embittered against the South, will venture to interfere with such ships or their cargo. The Black Republicans, even if they had the power, which fortunately they have



not, would be too prudent to attempt anything of the sort, for the leaders of that pestilent party are well aware that such atrocious conduct would be promptly crushed out, if it did not immediately lead to a rigid blockade of all the ports of offending Northern States.<sup>13</sup>

The belicose prediction of this editorial must have made the immediate secessionists very joyful. It seems strange that so close to the beginning of the Civil War, there was still the idea that the south could easily blockade the north, and that the trade which was so vital to New Orleans would continue without interruption. The idea of northern coercion by a superior force was, evidently, too remote to even conjecture.

Miles tried again to limit the powers of the delegates to Montgomery, by introducing a resolution to that effect. There was a long discussion as to whether the members of the delegation to Montgomery had been granted specific or general powers. Cannon of Avoyelles, who seems to have been one of the few members of the convention who had the slightest sense of humor, concluded the argument with a speech, in which he

.... said if he understood the question, it was to define the extent of the powers which we had delegated to our representatives at Montgomery, in the convention of the seceded States, now being holden at the capital of Alabama. But it seemed to him that this convention was in the most oblivious state of incomprehensibility as to what powers they had or had not conferred. They seemed to be in the condition of an antiquated, antideluvian China teapot with a broken spout which was totally inadequate to comprehend whether it had ever given vent to the fumes of Bohea and Souchong! (Laughter)

It was an old maxim, that great minds ever differed. Was it wonderful, then, that in this convention, where we had minds ranging from the cotton classification of "ordinary" to "middling fair," that there should be a difference on this question? (Roars of laughter.) He had every faith and confidence in the integrity of our delegates to Montgomery, and felt that they would do their duty, their whole duty, and nothing but their duty. He therefore would move to lay the resolution of the gentleman from Orleans (Mr. Miles), on the table.<sup>14</sup>

The Miles' Resolution and all amendments and substitutes was laid on the table by a vote of 85 to 26.

<sup>13</sup> *Daily Crescent*, February 4, 1861.

<sup>14</sup> *Daily Picayune*, February 7, 1861.

In addition to the problem of limiting the powers of the Montgomery delegates, there was the very real question of state defense. Richard Taylor, the son of General Zachary Taylor, had been appointed chairman of the military and naval affairs committee.

He presented an ordinance from his committee, which he explained . . . and said it had been drawn up with great care by experienced and educated military men. If it should become necessary that the whole militia force of the State should be called out, we would have a regular organized staff to take command at once, and thus save great irregularities and waste of time and money. The force contemplated to be raised by the ordinance would be between seventeen and eighteen hundred men. It was estimated that to put our fortifications on a proper war footing, it would take at least 2,500 men, but the force to be established by the ordinance when well drilled would be sufficient for all ordinary purposes. The Governor was authorized by this act to disband or transfer this force to the Southern Government to be established at Montgomery.

He would state that he had received a letter from a very efficient officer at Fort Jackson, commanding the approaches to this city, in which it was stated that it would be necessary that important repairs should be made to said fort immediately.

In relation to the action taken by the Military Board, he stated that, on examination, the State was found to be utterly defenceless. Out of the fund appropriated by the General Assembly of \$500,000 for the defence of the State, about \$24,000 had already been expended, while contracts for arms and other expenditures to be met would amount to about \$200,000, leaving a surplus. Besides this fund, under any emergency, we should not have to resort to taxation or the issuing of bonds, as there was also in the Treasury the Swamp Land Fund. which, by a late ordinance, would be issued for the defence of the State, amounting to \$700,000.<sup>15</sup>

The ordinance, which virtually created a standing army in the state, was the second step in the development of Louisiana as an independent nation. It reads, as finally adopted, as follows:

An ordinance for the establishment of a regular Military Force for the State of Louisiana.

We, the people of Louisiana, in Convention assembled, do ordain, and it is hereby ordained by authority of the same

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, February 6, 1861.

1st. That immediately after the passage of this Ordinance there shall be formed a regular military force for the protection of the State, to consist of one Regiment of Artillery, one Regiment of Infantry, and such general and staff officers as are hereinafter provided for.

2nd. That the Regiment of Artillery shall consist of one Colonel, who shall be chief of Engineers and Artillery, one Lieutenant Colonel, two majors, one of whom shall be chief of Ordinance, one Sergeant Major and eight companies: each of which shall consist of One Captain, two first Lieutenants, one second Lieutenant, Four Sergeants, four Corporals, four Artificers, two Musicians, and Eighty-six privates. The Regiment of infantry shall consist of one Colonel, one Lieutenant Colonel, one Major, one Sergeant Major, and eight companies; each company shall consist of one Captain, one first Lieutenant, two second Lieutenants, four Sergeants, four Corporals, two Musicians, and Ninety privates. Each Regiment to have one Adjutant appointed from the subalterns of the line.

3rd. That there shall be one Major General who shall rank and command next to the Commander-in-Chief, with two Aids-de-Camp, with the rank of first Lieutenant, to be attached as extra subalterns, to the Regiment of the line. One Adjutant and Inspector-General, with the rank of Colonel, and one Assistant Adjutant-General, with the rank of Captain. One Quarter-master-General, with the rank of Colonel and three assistant Quartermasters, with the rank of Captain. The duties of the subsistence and pay departments to be performed by the Quartermaster's department. One Surgeon, with the rank of Major, and three assistants, with the rank of first Lieutenant; and two military storekeepers and twelve enlisted men of Ordinance. (sic)

4". That all the commissioned Officers provided for in this Ordinance shall be appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and the enlisted men shall engage to serve for three years, unless sooner discharged. Provided that the Governor or the Legislature shall have power to discharge this force whenever the safety of the State no longer requires its services or to transfer it to such confederated government as the State may join.

5". That all Officers and soldiers provided for in the Ordinance, shall receive the same pay and allowance as now made in similar grades and corps in the service of the United States except the Major General who shall only receive the pay of a Brigadier General when commanding in that grade.



6". That the rules and articles of War as they exist in the Army of the United States are hereby adopted, as far as practicable, as the military code for the government of all land forces which are now or may be in the Service of the State, and that the Executive be authorized to prepare and publish such regulations as may be necessary for the Service.

7". That all expenses in carrying out this Ordinance into effect shall be defrayed out of such appropriations as have been made or may be made by the Convention or Legislature for Military purposes, the money to be drawn from the treasury on warrants of the Chief of the disbursing department, approved by the Auditor of Public Accounts, who shall keep correct account of all such disbursements and shall report the same to the General Assembly at each session thereof.

8". That the Legislature of this State may at any time alter, amend or abolish any of the provisions of this Ordinance.<sup>16</sup>

A nation which has a diplomatic corps, and maintains a standing army, must have a suitable flag. Consequently, Elgee proposed a resolution that a committee of three be appointed to report to the convention on the proper banner to be adopted as the emblem of the free state of Louisiana. He was named chairman, with Roman and Briscoe as collaborators.

This same delegate then asked what body was supreme in Louisiana—the convention or the legislature.

Mr. Elgee offered a resolution conferring upon the State Legislature all the powers delegated to Congress by the Constitution of the United States. He supported this in a speech in which he said that he thought this Convention showed a disposition to make itself a legislative body. According to all law, and every principle of republican government, legislative bodies must consist of two houses, whereas this Convention is but one, and if any laws passed by this Convention do not work well, how can they be amended or expunged except by the calling of another Convention? Here is a body costing the State \$5,000 a week, and the Legislature is actually doing nothing for they do not know what laws to pass, in consequence of not knowing what action this Convention intends taking, which brings an expense of about \$10,000 a week on the State. Leave all legislative enactments to the General Assembly,

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<sup>16</sup> *Journal*, pp. 83-84.

and the Convention can adjourn to meet on call. It is the practise in this body to leave too much of the work to committees, and members are too willing to put the labor on the shoulders of others, which is not productive of good results. Sometimes there is great imperfection in the deliberation of committees, and their work is too hastily done, and too hastily satisfied. Instance the report of the Committee on State Constitution.

Mr. J. G. Olivier, of St. Mary, arose to say that the gentleman from Rapides had gone too far in charging that this Convention had strayed without the bounds of their legitimate duties. Mr. Elgee interrupted to say the gentleman misunderstood him; he had merely observed that he thought there was a disposition in the Convention to act as a legislative body. Mr. Olivier continued: The Convention has only passed such legislative enactments as were imperatively demanded by the withdrawal of the State from the Union . . . <sup>17</sup>

As yet there had not been any formal celebration of the secession of Louisiana. No one was surprised, therefore, when on February, 6, the following proclamation was made public:

Mayoralty of New Orleans  
City Hall, February 4, 1861

In conformity with a resolution adopted by the Board of assistant Aldermen, I, John T. Monroe, Mayor of the city of New Orleans, hereby request all citizens to illuminate their residences, or places of business, on WEDNESDAY NIGHT, the 6th instant, in honor of the passage of the ORDINANCE whereby Louisiana dissolved her connection with the Federal Union.

JOHN T. MONROE  
Mayor<sup>18</sup>

To the surprise of everyone, when the Board of Aldermen met to confirm the action of the assistant aldermen, it postponed the celebration from the sixth to the twenty-second of February. The Picayune, in commenting upon this remarkable "ratification," said:

This unexpected action placed the good folks in a fidget. Those who had taken much trouble to get up a tasteful display of lights did not feel disposed to delay the illumination. Others, who had not prepared at all, rejoiced at the

<sup>17</sup> *Bee*, February 5, 1861.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in *Bee*, February 6, 1861.

postponement. Some preferred to show their patriotism on the anniversary of the birthday of the Father of his Country, whilst others did not see how a resolution to illuminate in honor of the disruption of the Union could be carried out on the anniversary of the founder of the Union. Much was said pro and con, and finally everybody concluded to act as he thought best . . .

The result was that a great many buildings were illuminated and a great many others were not . . .<sup>19</sup>

The contemporary account of the celebration described the scene as follows:

The proclamation from the Mayor, calling for an illumination last night, was very generally responded to by our citizens, notwithstanding the action of the Board of Aldermen in postponing it until the 22nd. The principal display was to be found on Canal, Royal and St. Charles streets, which were thronged with ladies and gentlemen from dark until ten o'clock, observing and admiring the beautiful effect produced. Great taste was displayed in this illumination some of the arrangements being really magnificent. The Pelican and Boston Clubs on Canal street, and Kittedge's store on St. Charles street, were noticeable in this respect. The Chasseurs-a-Pied paraded to add eclat to this popular demonstration in honor of the independence of Louisiana, but we were not so fortunate as to see them. The Orleans Cadets, Captain Charles Dreaux, were also out on parade with the same view, marching 83 strong.<sup>20</sup>

This display must have been quite striking. The illumination was entirely by gas, of course, but quite elaborate designs were attempted.

The richest and most beautiful display on this street (and we believe in the city) was in front of the Pickwick Club building. The Pelican and her young, and worded mottoes and fanciful devices, were pictured in a setting of precious stones in mosaic, all over the front of the building. This part of St. Charles street was jammed, as long as the display at the Pickwick club lasted.<sup>21</sup>

There was a return, on the next day to the more serious business of the convention. As had been pointed out by "Jefferson," the secession of Louisiana left the state without any really legally qualified voters. For that reason, the convention proceeded

<sup>19</sup> *Daily Picayune*, February 7, 1861.

<sup>20</sup> *Bee*, February 7, 1861.

<sup>21</sup> *Daily Crescent*, February 7, 1861.



to discuss and adopt an ordinance which would define the persons who were eligible for citizenship, and to provide for naturalization and registering of aliens within the state. This ordinance read as follows:

We the people of Louisiana, in Convention assembled do declare and ordain That all free white persons embraced in the following classification, shall be deemed and considered and are hereby declared to be citizens of Louisiana, viz:

1st. All persons who at the date of the adoption of the Ordinance of Secession, viz: the twenty-sixth day of January eighteen hundred and sixty-one, were citizens of this state.

2nd. Women of foreign birth, now married or who may hereafter be married, to citizens of this State, and who have acquired or shall acquire a domicile therein.

3rd. All persons now born or who may hereafter be born out of the limits and jurisdiction of this State whose fathers were, or shall be at the time of their birth or conception, citizens of this State: Provided, however, that the rights of citizens shall not descend to persons whose fathers never resided in this State.

4". Persons of foreign birth, who at the date of Secession aforesaid, declared their intentions to become citizens of the United States under the naturalization laws thereof or who had arrived in the United States under the age of eighteen years and had continued their residence therein for five years before the date of the Ordinance of Secession, and who shall comply with the further requirements of said laws, which for that purpose and to that extent are hereby adopted as laws of Louisiana, with the exception, however, that the oath to be taken by the applicant shall be of allegiance to the State of Louisiana.

5". Children of persons specified in the preceding paragraph, who shall be dwelling in this State, and be under the age of twenty one years, when their fathers shall be naturalized, as provided for in said paragraph and shall after attaining the age of majority, take oath of allegiance to the State.

6". All persons being citizens of the United States, aforesaid, or citizens of any one of the States that have Seceded therefrom who may come into this State to reside at any time within twelve months prior to the date of secession aforesaid and who shall after a residence of twelve months, take the oath of Allegiance to this state: Provided the oath of allegiance shall not be required after the forma-

tion of a Southern Confederacy of persons coming into this State and being citizens of said confederacy and of any one of the States composing the same.

7". Be it further ordained. That the oath of Allegiance shall be administered in open Court by the Judge of any one of the District Courts of this State, and shall remain of record in a book to be kept for that purpose by the Clerk of the Court.<sup>22</sup>

No legislative body, however easy the labors which it performs, feels competent to continue without a recess, during which it can breathe more freely. Therefore, Semmes introduced a motion that the Convention adjourn from the 12th of February until the 15th of March, but this was amended so that the body would re-assemble on the 4th of March, unless sooner convened by the president or by a committee of three appointed by him for that purpose. The convention adopted the resolution. It is not stated definitely anywhere that the pay of the delegates ceased during the intermission. If the lavish way in which the state monies were expended later is any criterion by which to judge, the members of the convention continued to draw their regular per diem compensation throughout their vacation.

When it became known that the convention was planning to adjourn for a considerable period, from February 12 to March 4, there was some discussion and a good deal of impatience. The *Crescent*, which had been a supporter of the body, appeared with this editorial:

According to a resolution adopted some days since, the Convention, now in session at the City Hall, will adjourn this afternoon at 2 o'clock, unless the resolve in question is recinded. The adjournment will be to the 5th of March.

We understand a motion will be made today to rescind the resolution of adjournment. That it should carry, or that the recess should comprise a briefer period, appears clear to us. In these troublous times, the paramount authority of the commonwealth should always be on hand, or within striking distance. It seems to us that a recess until the 23rd or 27th of February would be amply sufficient, and we respectfully throw out the suggestion.

Indeed our Convention may, in a very few days, receive important official intelligence from Montgomery—intelligence of such character as will require judicious considera-

<sup>22</sup> *Journal*, pp. 97-98.

tion as well as prompt and determined action. Hence, the necessity that the adjournment should be brief. Then, again, attempts may be made to blockade the port. We do not believe this will be done; but should our Abolition enemies venture upon such an extreme measure, the greater the necessity of the presence of the Convention.

For these reasons not to mention others that will readily suggest themselves to the members of the Convention, we hope no protracted adjournment will be indulged in.<sup>23</sup>

As an independent state, Louisiana was faced with the problem of what to do with the circuit and district courts which had been established and maintained by the recent government of the United States. After a great deal of discussion, the following ordinance dealing with the matter was adopted by the convention:

The people of the State of Louisiana, in Convention assembled do ordain, and it is hereby ordained, as follows:

Section 1st. All acts and parts of acts of the Congress of the late United States of America relating to the organization and jurisdiction of the Circuit and District Courts established by the said Congress within the Territorial limits of the State of Louisiana, and relating to the administration of justice in said Courts which were in force in this State at the time of the separation of this State from the said Confederacy, are hereby re-enacted and declared to be in full force and effect as laws of the State of Louisiana; and all writs and process from said Courts shall be issued in the name and by the authority of the State of Louisiana.

Sect. 2nd. All offices held in this State under and by virtue of the Acts of Congress aforesaid, shall continue as organized under said acts; and the functions and duties thereof shall be performed by the respective officers who have had charge of the same under said laws: Provided said officers shall recognize the sole and exclusive authority of the State of Louisiana by accepting and receiving commission from the Governor as officers of the State of Louisiana, and by taking the oath of office prescribed by the Ordinance passed by this Convention amending the 90<sup>th</sup> Article of the Constitution of this State.

Sect. 3rd. Should any person in charge of any such office refuse to comply with the proviso to the foregoing section, the said Office shall be deemed vacant, and the books, records, and effects thereof of every kind whatsoever thereto appertaining or in any wise belonging shall

<sup>23</sup> *Daily Crescent*, February 12, 1861.



be delivered to such other person as the Governor shall commission to hold and perform the duties of the said Office: and should any office heretofore held in this State under and by virtue of the laws of the United States mentioned in the first section of this Ordinance, become vacant (sic) from any cause whatsoever, the Governor shall have authority and is hereby directed to Commission some competent and experienced person to perform the duties thereof, Provided that all such appointees subscribe the oath prescribe (sic) in the second section of this Ordinance.

Sect. 4". All officers commissioned by the Governor by virtue of this Ordinance, shall, within twenty days after the date of their Commission, execute, in favor of the State of Louisiana, bonds analogous to those which have been heretofore required to be executed in favor of the United States in similar cases and with like security; and said bonds shall be deposited among the archives of the State in the office of the Secretary of State. And all accounts, abstracts, funds, vouchers, or reports of any kind whatsoever, required by the laws of the United States, or by instructions from the Executive department of the Government to be transmitted to said Government, shall be transmitted at the time prescribed by said laws or instructions to the Corresponding Executive department of the Government of the State of Louisiana. And the State of Louisiana doth hereby guarantee and indemnify the Officers who comply with the provisions of the Ordinance against all claims and demands of the United States arising out of such compliance.

Sect. 5". That all suits, actions or proceedings of any description whatsoever pending in said courts at the time the Ordinance of Secession was passed shall continue, and be carried on, as if no interruption to the business of the said Courts had taken place and in all cases pending in the Circuit Court mentioned in the first section of this Ordinance, wherein a final judgement or decree has been or may be rendered, from which judgement or decree a writ of error or appeal would lie, under the provisions of the Acts hereinbefore described, as also in all cases in the several Courts of this State, from the Judgements or decrees in which a writ of error would lie to the Supreme Court of the United States under the Acts in force, as aforesaid, execution upon the said judgements or decrees shall be stayed: Provided the party desirous of applying for a writ of error or appeal shall within ten days exclusive of Sundays, after the rendition of the Judgement or passing the decree complained of, file his petition addressed

to said Court stating his intention to apply for a writ of error or appeal as the case may require to have the said cause re-examined by the Court to be constituted for that purpose: and shall within ten days after the organization of said court perfect his said application; and Provided, further, That the said party shall give bond with good and sufficient security conditioned, to perfect and prosecute said writ of error or appeal, with such other conditions and in such amount as are prescribed in similar cases by the laws hereby re-enacted.

Sect. 6". That all suits and actions pending in the said Circuit and District Courts or in any Courts of this State heretofore instituted by the United States, shall be carried on and prosecuted in the name and for the benefit of the State of Louisiana, and all decrees and judgements heretofore rendered in said Courts in favor of the United States shall be executed and enforced in the name and for the benefit of this State.

Sect. 7". That the Clerk or Clerks to be appointed under the provisions of the above ordinance shall be authorized to cause a suitable seal or seals to be made for the use of said Court or Courts; a full description whereof shall be recorded in the office of the Secretary of State.<sup>24</sup>

With Louisiana no longer a part of the federal Union, it was, obviously, inconceivable that its representatives should remain longer in Congress. John Slidell, Senator from Louisiana, took leave of that body with a speech, of which the following is a telegraphic summary:

Mr. Slidell said that this document [the ordinance of secession] places an effectual record that Louisiana had ceased to be a component part of the United States, and terminates the connection of himself and colleagues with this body, and the occasion in parting, for some words with those whom we leave, some of whom we hope to meet again in a new confederacy. The new confederacy would not attempt to improve the Constitution of the United States. It would recognize the obligations of all existing relations, and those especially relating to the African Slave trade. It will be willing to assume a just proportion of the public debt, and to account for all the property of the United States which they were compelled to take for self-defence. They would recognize the right of the inhabitants of the valley of the Mississippi to the free navigation of the

<sup>24</sup> *Journal*, pp. 104-07.

Mississippi river without tax or toll of any kind. They hope for peace, but the decision of the question depends on the free states. He had no doubt that if the issue was fairly presented to the people of the states, they might have a peaceful separation with the probability of a complete or partial reconstruction of the Union, but with the present representation in either branch of Congress, he could indulge in no such hope, and they must be prepared to resist coercion under any pretext. The north might, if they chose, consider them bound to the Union, and deny their right, he would not say of secession, but revolution, or rebellion if they chose to call it so. It might ignore the Declaration of Independence, and attempt to reduce the South to submission. It might declare a blockade, but the South would meet them and permit no interruption of commerce, and would meet them on the sea under the old flag, for they did not intend to give up the flag—it belonged to the south as much as to the north; they could get vessels from the same places that now carry on the slave trade—New York and New England. He referred to a blockade of the ports, and thought if foreign nations were not admitted, they would interfere. He said the south would not commence the fight. He denied the charge that the movement was but the consummation of a long contemplated plot, and claimed that it was the calm and deliberate action of the people. He referred to the many kindnesses received in this chamber, and bid the Senate farewell.<sup>25</sup>

When it came time for the other Senator to withdraw,

Mr. Benjamin argued against the assertion that Louisiana could not go out of the Union because she was bought as the property of the United States. Louisiana was acquired under treaty, which guarantied to the citizens of the territory protection to property. He claimed that she had special reasons for going out, because the treaty stipulations under which she had been acquired were broken entirely by the government. He claimed that the charge of rebellion against the south was an admission of oppression, for never in the history of the world did millions rise in rebellion against honor and justice, and when the people, with common consent, revolt, it must be criminals against whom the revolt is aimed. The people in the south glory in such treason as glowed in the soul of John Hampden, as burst from the lips of Patrick Henry, and cast a halo around the name of Washington. He concluded with a tribute to the friends of the south in the northern states, and bade the Senate farewell. (Applause in the galleries.)<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Daily True Delta*, February 9, 1861.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*



From Washington, with the affairs of a large nation, to New Orleans, with the concerns of a small republic, was not a very great break. The similarity of the two governments was very great. Under the terms of the military bill adopted by the convention the following appointments were made by Governor Moore:

Major General Braxton Bragg, late of the 3rd. Regiment, U. S. Artillery, and brevetted Major for gallant conduct at Monterey and in serving Gen. Taylor's batteries at Buena Vista.

Adjutant General Major George Deas, late of the U. S. 5th infantry, brevetted Major, for gallant and distinguished service at Contreras, Churubusco, El Molino, and Chapultepec.

Quartermaster General; A. C. Myers, late of the U. S. 4th Inf., brevetted Lieutenant Colonel for gallant and meritorious conduct at Palo Alto, Resaca de La Palma, and Churubusco—Quartermaster of Worth's Division, in the Valley of Mexico.

Colonel of Engineers: Major P. G. T. Beauregard, brevetted Captain for his conduct at Contreras and Churubusco, and Major for his conduct in the battle of Chapultepec, where he was twice wounded. He was recently appointed to the command at West Point, which place he resigns to devote himself to the service of his native State.<sup>27</sup>

In the midst of the session of Feb. 9, 1861, the news of the election of Davis and Stephens to the presidency and vice-presidency of the provisional confederated government, was handed to Mouton. He begged permission to announce this important occurrence, and immediately Walker introduced the following resolutions, which were instantly and unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, that this Convention receive with the most cordial approval the intelligence this day received by Telegraph of the election of Jefferson Davis of Miss(issippi) as President and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia as Vice-President of the Provisional government of the Southern Republic.

*Resolved*, that the secretary of this Convention be instructed to communicate the foregoing resolution to the President of the Convention at Montgomery.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Daily Picayune*, February 10, 1861.

<sup>28</sup> *Journal*, p. 110.

The election of Davis and Stephens elicited the following editorial from the *Bee*.

The intelligence of the unanimous election by the Southern Congress, at Montgomery, of JEFFERSON DAVIS and ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS, as President and Vice-President of the Provisional Government of the seceding states, was received in our city on Saturday, and created almost universal satisfaction. There were those who might have preferred STEPHENS for the highest office, knowing, as they do, his extraordinary talent and administrative capacity: but we think the Southern Congress displayed both wisdom and liberality in their selection. The offer of the Presidency was due to Colonel DAVIS, because he had been a bold, manly, consistent and unwearied defender of Southern rights, and because he was one of the first to proclaim the invincible determination of the cotton States to withdraw from the Union. Mr. STEPHENS, on the other hand, was originally a Cooperationist, though he yielded heartily to the decision of Georgia, and surrendered patriotically his private convictions to the popular verdict. His election as Vice-President is a tribute to his genius, elequence, purity of character and devotion to the interests and honor of the South, and reflects marked credit on the magnanimity as well as discrimination of the Congress. We have no doubt whatever that the administration of both these able and faithful leaders will promote the independence, augment the resources, enhance the dignity of the Confederacy over which they have been called to preside.<sup>29</sup>

Estlin announced, as chairman of the special committee appointed by the president to have a salute fired in honor of the event, that Major J. B. Walton, of the battalion of Washington Artillery had proffered the services of his corps for that purpose. A salute of one hundred guns would be fired at five o'clock that afternoon by this unit.

On the following day, February 11, Elgee, as chairman of the committee on the adoption of a state flag, presented the following ordinance, which was voted on immediately, on a suspension of the rules:

We the people of Louisiana, In Convention assembled, do ordain and establish that the Flag of the State of Louisiana shall consist of and be composed of thirteen horizontal Stripes of the colors hereinafter described and to be

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<sup>29</sup> *Bee*, February 11, 1861.

disposed of in the following manner, commencing from the upper line or edge of the Flag, to wit: The first stripe blue, Second White, Third, Red, Fourth White, fifth Blue, Sixth White, Seventh Red, Eighth White, Ninth Blue, Ten White, Eleventh Red (Sic) Twelfth (Sic) White, and the Thirteenth or bottom stripe Blue.

We do further ordain and establish that there shall be in the upper or chief corner of the Flag, a square field, the color whereof shall be red and the sides thereof equal to the width of Seven Stripes and that in the center of said field there shall be a Star of due and proportionate size having five points or rays and that the color of said Star shall be a pale Yellow. (Sic)

We do further ordain and establish that the said Flag and no other shall be the Nation Flag of the State of Louisiana.

Mr. Elgee's remark on the flag were in substance as follows:

That the Committee being satisfied that the device of the Pelican was not in accordance with the tastes (sic) or wishes of the people, their attention was directed to ascertain if they could not weave into a Flag the symbols and colors that were familiar to the people, and endeared by a thousand recollections, that the "gorgeous ensign" (sic) of the once "Great Republic" lay at our feet, its stripes were defaced; its stars had faded; and the glorious Constellation had disappeared, which had borne our name from the ice ribbed shores of the Great Northern Sea to the very verge of the Southern Pole, that the Committee unanimously (sic) said "let us retain these stripes, for however discord, dissension and frenzied hate may have torn the Country *asunder*, the memory of the "Old Thirteen still lives," their struggles, their trials, and the crowning achievement of their labours shall live, while Civilization lasts, in memory of the Philosophers, the Statesman (sic), the Philanthropist, and the Christian; and can only be forgotten when we cease to turn with affectionate reverence, to the calm, and wise counsels of him, whom I would still fain believe is "first in the hearts of his Country men." We dedicate therefore the thirteen stripes upon our Flag to the memory of those whose unconquerable love of Freedom has taught us this day, how peacefully to vindicate our right, and protect our liberties.

The Committee too could not forget that another race, bold, warlike and adventurous had planted the first Colony of white Men on the Shores of Louisiana the name of our



State, that of our City, nay even the morning roll Call of the Convention, as it summoned us to our duties, bade us remember that some tribute was due to the Children and descendents of the founders of the Colony—The Blue, the White, the Red emblems of Hope, Virtue, and Valor, to the memory of those who first on this soil laid the foundations of Empire.

Still another race and another nation remain who equally demanded a recognition in a Flag designed to be National—if to France we are indebted for the foundation of the Colony, Spain merits an acknowledgement at our hands for by her was the infant Structure built up—her mild and paternal rule, is yet spoken of, by the oldest inhabitants, whilst the great body of our law stands this day a monument of her wisdom—To the Children of Spain we dedicate the Colors of Red and Yellow which we have woven into our plan. The Star cannot fail to remind you that Louisiana has arisen to take her place in the Political Firmament.

United then our three distinct nationalities with one, we present a Flag which carries with it a symbol dear to every American, whether it be at the last hour of dissolution or the dawn of a new birth it is the badge of Union.

What the future fortunes of this our Flag may be is of course known only to *Him* who holds in his hands the destinies of nations. Should the violence of enemies force us to the battle field, may it be found in the foremost ranks of the Conflict—but our mission is that of peace and Brotherhood, so permit me as I consign to the Convention this new emblem of our Nationality to speak aloud the wish dear to my heart that it now, and forever, may wave over a peaceful, a happy, a united, and independent Louisiana.<sup>30</sup>

The report of the committee, which took the form of the above ordinance, was unanimously adopted. The first flag which Elgee presented to the Convention was made by H. Cassidy, a tent and sailmaker, who had a shop at the corner of Poydras and Fulton streets, in New Orleans.

Taylor of St. Charles, as chairman of the committee on military and naval affairs, was delegated to make arrangements for the proper inauguration of the flag of the state. He made his report the next day, February 12, which was, briefly, that the Convention should go out into Lafayette square in a body, and

<sup>30</sup> *Journal*, pp. 113-15.

there witness the unfurling of the banner from the the flag-staff on top of the City Hall. The report was accepted, and the convention adjourned temporarily, so that it could take part in the celebration.

Mr. Taylor . . . said he had been requested by Maj. Gen. Lewis to invite the members of the convention on the green in Lafayette square to witness the ceremony which would take place at 11 o'clock. His Honor Mayor Monroe had also tendered his services to the convention, and arrangements were made to run the flag up on the staff of the City Hall precisely at the hour named.

He therefore moved that the convention take a recess until half past 11 o'clock, and that the Sergeant at Arms be instructed to inform Maj. Gen. Lewis that the Convention accepted the invitation, and would meet the military at the hour named—which motion prevailed.

The members then formed into double file, headed by the President, Hon. Alex. Mouton, and Hon. H. M. Hyams, Lieutenant-Governor of the State, and marched to the green accompanied by a military escort. After passing in review in front of the military, the members of the convention formed on the left of the regiments. Everything being ready, precisely as the town clock struck the first bell of eleven, the flag was run up from the staff at the City Hall, when it was greeted with a salute of 21 guns from the Washington Artillery.

After the firing of the salute, three hearty cheers were given in honor of the flag, when the members again marched in front of the military, which saluted them as as they passed. The balconies of the private and public buildings which surrounded the Square, were densely crowded with the fair ladies of our city, and as the breeze unfurled the heaven-born hues of Louisiana's flag against the sky, displaying the beauteous harmony of its combined colors, a thrill of joy and admiration filled the spectators.<sup>21</sup>

The *Bee* gives this account of the celebration:

There was a great crowd of people at Lafayette Square yesterday morning to witness the inauguration of the newly adopted flag of independent Louisiana, but as we feared, in consequence of the occasion being during business hours, the military parade was not equal to what it would have been had the hour been appointed in the evening. The

<sup>21</sup> *Daily Picayune*, February 13, 1861.

First Brigade was represented by the Washington Artillery, Major Walton, First Company of Louisiana Riflemen, Capt. St. Paul, Louisiana Guards, Capt. Todd, Montgomery Guards, Capt. Nolan, and Sarsfield Rifles, Capt. O'Hara. The Legion was represented by the Yagers, and the Second Chasseurs-a-Pied, Capt. Meilleur.

The members of the Convention having entered the square, and the troops being drawn up by platoons facing the City Hall, precisely at eleven o'clock the flag was hoisted on the staff which surmounts the Municipal Building. The troops presented arms, one of the guns of the Artillery thundered forth, and the telegraph bells sounded their peal. A salute of 21 guns were fired (sic). The members of the convention, on invitation of General Lewis, then reviewed the troops, after which they paraded and were dismissed.<sup>32</sup>

The *Picayune* further supplements the account:

.... Meantime, the Hon. J. T. Monroe, Cols. Labuzan and DeChoiseul, and several other gentlemen had ascended to the top of the City Hall, and were standing at the foot of the flag-staff. As the first stroke of eleven o'clock chimed from the neighboring church, the first gun was fired, and the flag of Louisiana ascended swiftly and was unfurled to the breeze.

The salute of twenty-one guns was admirably well fired and when the last sound had ceased vibrating, the troops, in answer to Major Walton's invitation, gave three hearty cheers for their new flag, which was responded to by the multitude crowded in the streets, and at every window and balcony around the square.<sup>33</sup>

Such is the story of the second phase of Louisiana as the state entered into the full glory of her independence. With the unfurling of her own flag, she achieved the highest rung of the ladder of national aspiration. She had become a nation complete in every detail—with diplomatic representatives, an army, a separate judicial system, and a flag.

<sup>32</sup> *Bee*, February 13, 1861.

<sup>33</sup> *Daily Picayune*, February 13, 1861.

(To be continued)



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**FORT JESUP, FORT SELDEN, CAMP SABINE,  
CAMP SALUBRITY**

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**Four Forgotten Frontier Army Posts of Western Louisiana**

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*By J. FAIR HARDIN*

*Lieut. Col., J. A. G., Louisiana National Guard*

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**FOURTH INSTALLMENT**

(Continued from July, 1933, Quarterly)

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**CHAPTER XI.**

**GAINES LEAVES THE FRONTIER**

**B**EFORE his departure from the frontier, Gaines had made several changes in the disposition of the troops. Five companies of the Sixth Infantry, and two companies of the 3rd were returned to Fort Jesup. Major Riley was ordered to take three companies of the 6th Infantry to a position on the Sabine River ninety miles north of Camp Sabine. Major Belknap, with two companies of the 3rd and two of the 7th Infantry, was ordered to Camp Sabine. Brigadier General Arbuckle, stationed at Fort Gibson, in Arkansas, was left in command.<sup>80</sup>

Toward the close of November, 1836, after reading the action of the Court of Inquiry, General Gaines must have been further nettled by the following almost sarcastic excerpt from the annual report of General Macomb, commanding the army, covering his activities on the border:

"In the month of January Major General Gaines was ordered to the Western Frontier of Louisiana to assume the personal command of all the troops of the United States employed in any part of the region adjoining the Mexican boundary; and in February the 6th Regiment of Infantry was ordered from Jefferson Barracks to Fort Jesup, a post within 25 miles of the Sabine, with a view of protecting the frontier from the incursions of the Indians, and, at the same time, to keep peace among the Indian tribes themselves which inhabit the adjoining country. Instructions

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<sup>80</sup> *Niles Register*, Vol. LI, p. 161.

were also given to General Gaines to fulfill the treaty stipulations between Mexico and the United States, in reference to the Indians on the Western Frontier, whether belonging to the territory of the United States or Mexico, and especially to maintain a strict neutrality in regard to the contending parties in Texas.

"From information received by General Gaines that the Indians meditated hostilities, he conceived it his duty to call on the executives of Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee and Alabama, for a force consisting of three brigades and one battalion, to aid him in maintaining peace on the frontiers, and repelling any attack from the Indians. Shortly after, finding that he had been deceived in reference to the intentions of the Indians, he recalled his requisition for militia on the States above mentioned before they could be embodied.

"At a subsequent period, General Gaines, becoming convinced that a militia force was necessary on the frontiers, repeated his requisition for militia, which proceeding being disapproved by the President, they did not march to the frontiers. The general, however, as a precautionary measure, ordered the squadron of United States dragoons, and six companies of the 7th Regiment of Infantry, stationed at Fort Gibson, to march to Fort Towson, on the Red River, where they arrived about the 17th of May, and finally pushed these corps in advance as far as Nacogdoches, where they still were at the last reports from that place, dated in September. A Camp was also formed on the left bank of the Sabine.

"From the reports received from the commanding officer at Nacogdoches, he is of the opinion that there is no necessity for the continuance of the force at that place; and from the views taken of the state of affairs on the Mexican frontier by the general officer who has succeeded General Gaines in the immediate command in that quarter, and the instructions he has received, the belief is entertained that by this time the United States troops at Nacogdoches have been withdrawn, and returned to their respective stations within our border."<sup>81</sup>

Macomb gave all of the necessary information correctly, but was careful to make his report reflect as little credit as possible upon General Gaines. Notwithstanding the result of the court of inquiry, however, Gaines remained in command of the Western Department with his headquarters probably at New Orleans or Baton Rouge, having been supplanted by General Arbuckle only

<sup>81</sup> Am. St. Papers, Mil. Aff. Vol. VI, pp. 818-819.

as to immediate command of the western frontier. He is so carried in the annual report of the Secretary of War for 1836, dated December 3 of that year, wherein the total number of troops in the Western Department is given as 2458, of which 360 were stationed at Fort Jesup, 124 "at a station seventy miles from that place"; 147 at Camp Sabine, and 428 at Camp Nacogdoches.<sup>82</sup> In the same report he mentioned the fact that on November 11 General Arbuckle had complained of the unhealthfulness of Nacogdoches, and requested authority to withdraw the troops therefrom, which was promptly granted. Colonel Many was in command at Fort Jesup. The commanders at the other posts have already been given.

The Acting Quartermaster General of the Army, in his annual report of November 22, 1836, stated that the appropriation previously made for barracks at Fort Jesup had been suspended "upon the suggestion that Fort Jesup, being 25 miles from the Sabine, is too remote from the frontier, and that a more advanced position would probably be occupied." He suggested that authority might be obtained to allow the expenditure of these funds at such place in the vicinity of Fort Jesup as it may be deemed proper to occupy. It was doubtless Gaines who had made the "suggestion," with his fixity of purpose in occupying as "advanced" a position as possible.<sup>83</sup>

The year 1837 was a quiet one at Fort Jesup, after the excitement of the two previous years, but it saw a shifting of troops and a change of command:

"Brig. Gen. Brooke will proceed to \* \* \* Ft. Crawford and relieve the companies of the 1st Infantry there stationed.

"Immediately upon being relieved, the 1st Infantry will proceed to Fort Jesup, and join the troops there stationed.

"Brevet Brig. Gen. Atkinson is assigned to the command of all the troops stationed west of the Mississippi and below the 37th degree of N. Lat. He will accordingly repair to Fort Jesup and assume the command."

By order of Major General Macomb<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 807.

<sup>83</sup> Am. State Papers, Mil. Aff. Vol. VI, p. 830.

<sup>84</sup> G. O. No. 31, A. G. O. Wash. D. C., May 18, 1837, quoted from Army and Navy Chronicle, Vol. 4, p. 319.



The name of General Atkinson calls to notice another army post of Western Louisiana, contemporaneous with and intimately connected with Fort Jesup. Cantonment Atkinson was established on the shore of Lake Charles and on the site of the present city of that name, as a part of the system of protection of the western frontier, by Captain George Birch and Company E, 7th Infantry in April, 1830. It was named for Colonel and Brevet Brigadier General Henry Atkinson, who was also the first Adjutant General of the Army. In November, 1831, Captain Birch was succeeded by Captain T. J. Harrison and Company F. 3rd Infantry, and in January, 1832, the post was abandoned and the troops removed to Fort Jesup.<sup>84a</sup>

In the report of the Secretary of War for 1837, at the request of the Senate, a "plan for the defense and protection of the western frontiers" was submitted, in which Fort Jesup figured prominently.

"In the meantime the navigable streams tributary to the Mississippi, from which the principal supplies are to be drawn, should be freed of their obstructions to the head of navigation; the Sabine which is known to furnish a good navigation, should in like manner be cleared; the posts of Jesup and Towson put in a state of defence, and the roads leading from the interior of Louisiana to the crossings of the Sabine be also put in order. \* \* \* "This force should be posted, one regiment of infantry and one company of artillery at Jesup,"

with further provisions for a reserve at Baton Rouge,

"from which point it could, as the necessity of the moment required, be transported in steamers, at any season of the year, in two days to Natchitoches, on its way to Jesup, in four to Towson, and in about the same time to the crossing of the road from Natchitoches to Nacogdoches, on the Sabine."<sup>85</sup>

Accompanying this report was a map illustrating the plan, and giving the locations and distances of the proposed permanent military roads to afford ready communication overland, as well as by water, between the various posts, one running from Fort Towson down Red River, via Coates Bluff, the present site of Shreveport, to Natchitoches, thence to Fort Jesup, thence one fork leading due west to the Sabine and the other leading southwest

<sup>84a</sup> Charles E. Cory, in *Lake Charles American Press*, September 28, 1932. Records AGO. Wash. and map from Gen. Land Off. Wash., showing location in Lake Charles Pub. Lib.

<sup>85</sup> Am. St. Papers, Mil. Aff. Vol. 7, pp. 779-780-781.

to the Coushatta Village on the Sabine, thence east to Opelousas and Baton Rouge. The construction had been authorized the year previous, at a cost of \$100,000.00. The recommended garrison for Fort Jesup was 300.

That General Gaines' exaggerated views of the situation on the frontier were not shared by his fellow officers stationed there is shown by the following excerpt from a letter written by Major B. Riley from Camp Sabine, August 28, 1837:

"\* \* \* \* I have been moved from Jefferson Barracks to Natchitoches, in this State, from thence to Fort Jesup, from Fort Jesup to this place, and from this place back to Jesup, and from thence to the Caddo Indians, and from thence to New Orleans, and from thence back to this place, where we have remained until this time, and how much longer I am unable to say. \* \* \* \* This country appears easier to get a living in than any other I have ever been in, and the people are less inclined to work than any set I have met with. We have been here nearly two years, and for what purpose I am unable to say, for there has been no invasion or threatened invasion that I know of. There are no Indians nearer than eighty or one hundred miles of us, and we are fifty or sixty miles from those larger planters who have so large a number of negroes that it would require a garrison near to prevent their negroes from rising. So you will see that we are too far from the former to protect the frontier inhabitants, as also to protect the master from the violence of his slaves, if they see cause to be discontented. We have temporary quarters built at this place, which is about two and a half miles from the river Sabine, on a straight line, and about four by the road. \* \* \*<sup>78</sup>

This was written by that same Major Bennett Riley who in the spring of 1829 had commanded the first military escort, composed of four companies of the 6th Infantry, of a trading caravan on the Santa Fe Trail, and whose experience in that prior service on the frontier is so delightfully told by Robert L. Duffus in "The Santa Fe Trail," Chapter Nine, New York, 1930.

The only flurry of excitement in the quiet tenor of existence at Fort Jesup during the year 1837 is contained in the following excerpt from the annual report of General Macomb:

"In consequence of information having been communicated to Col. Many, commanding the troops at Fort Jesup, that an insurrection among the negroes was apprehended

<sup>78</sup> Am. State Papers, Mil. Aff. Vol. VII, p. 957, Doc. No. 782, 25th Cong. 2nd Sess.

at Alexandria, Louisiana, that officer ordered thither two companies of his command, to afford the desired protection."<sup>87</sup>

This was doubtless a welcome diversion for these two companies, because the report further shows that "Two companies of the Fort Jesup garrison (temporarily absent) are engaged in removing obstructions from the Sabine River." General Gaines remained in command of the Western Department, with 331 men and officers at Fort Jesup, under Col. Many, 3rd Infantry, and 108 men and officers of the 6th Infantry still at Camp Sabine, under Major Glassel.

The tombs in the old Fort Jesup cemetery contain something of the record of these days. According to Belisle the oldest marked tomb, erected seven years before the Fort was built, bears the following inscription: "Viatoria, daughter of Alen and Viatoria Phillips; born March 15, 1815; died April 19, 1815."<sup>88</sup> Of the tragedies of the day of military occupation, we have the following: Ann Ramsey, consort of Major George Birch, U. S. A.; died October 25, 1829; aged 48 years." "Elizabeth Clair, consort of Major L. G. DeRussy; died August 30, 1836, aged 44 years." This was the first wife of this distinguished officer, who was later to become a Colonel of Engineers in the Confederate Army, and constructor of Fort DeRussy, on Red River, near Marksville. He was a member of a distinguished military family, whose brother became General DeRussy of the Federal Army, for whom Fort DeRussy in Hawaii is named. Colonel DeRussy married the second time Mrs. Russell, widow of Dr. Samuel P. Russell, whose home was at Grand Ecore, in Natchitoches Parish, and he lies buried in the ancient Russell cemetery near the great bluff at Grand Ecore upon which the Russell homestead stood. His tomb is covered by a slab, after the manner of those in eastern churchyards, bearing the following inscription: "L. G. DeRussy, born Dec. 23, 1795; Dec. 16, 1864."

An officer's tomb at Fort Jesup, since removed, bore the following inscription: "Lieut. Thomas Cutts, 3rd Regiment U. S. Infantry; died September 2, 1838; aged 31 years. Erected by officers of the regiment."

<sup>87</sup> Am. State Papers, Mil. Aff. Vol. VII, p. 589.

<sup>88</sup> *History of Sabine Parish*, p. 83.



The enlisted men were buried in a military cemetery west of the building area of the Fort, near the site of the later sawmill. Through the effort of Mr. J. W. Taylor, in 1907, all of the bodies which could be located were disinterred, by authority of an Act of Congress, and transported to the National Cemetery at Pineville, Louisiana.

There was born at the Post of Fort Jesup on April 19, 1835, a daughter to him who later became General Albert G. Blanchard. She was named Susan Blanchard and later became Mrs. Charles D. Elder, of New Orleans and was a well known author. She wrote "The Life of the Abbe Adrien Rouquette" and besides many poems and dramas of exceptional merit, her literary productions include "The Leos of the Papacy," "James the Second" "Savanarola," "Ellen Fitzgerald, a Southern Tale," and others.<sup>88a</sup>

An interesting reference to life at this frontier army post in 1837 is presented by the following advertisement from the *Red River Gazette*, published in Natchitoches in August of that year:

#### FORT JESUP HOTEL

A. W. P. Ussery has the pleasure to inform his friends and the public, that he has taken the Fort Jesup Hotel, and is now ready to receive company. He has a commodious house and stable, and a delightful situation. In addition to the comforts of a well regulated house, the weary traveller will be regaled at night and morning by the delightful music of the well known Military Band at the Fort, to listen to which is a treat, which will doubtless be an inducement for many to call. A. W. P. U. requests the patronage of the travelling community. May 14, 1837.

With the impetuous Gaines no longer stationed there, and the ability of Texas to maintain her independence becoming more and more certain, Fort Jesup again settled down to the humdrum existence of a peaceful frontier garrison. During the summer of 1838 the commanding officer there was directed to order Brevet Major Belknap to Fort Smith, Arkansas, "with such other portions of the command at Fort Jesup as could be spared, thus reducing the garrison not less than two companies."<sup>89</sup>

<sup>88a</sup> Library of Sou. Lit. Vol. 15, p. 185.

<sup>89</sup> G. O. 20 Adj. Gen. Office, July 2, 1838.

That it was regarded as an important element in the defense of the Western Frontier is shown by the following reference to it in the "Plan of Defense" submitted by the Secretary of War to the Senate on Jan. 3, 1838:

"The following are the forts established which may be considered as forming parts of the plan of defense: Fort Jesup, 25 miles from Natchitoches, on the road to Texas, Fort Towson, near the confluence of the Kismichi and Red Rivers, in the Choctaw Nation, 325 miles from Fort Jesup, Fort Leavenworth, Fort Snelling \* \* \* \*"

In the summer of 1840 the 3rd Infantry completed its long tour of service at Fort Jesup, being ordered with the 8th Infantry to Florida. The garrisons at Fort Towson, Fort Jesup and Fort Smith were relieved by detachments from the 4th Infantry, one company for each post.<sup>91</sup>

In 1841 Fort Jesup doubtless quartered the only physician in all the frontier country, for in the Journal of the Joint Commission to Fix the Boundary between the United States and the Republic of Texas under date of April 1 of that year, is the following entry:

"Lieutenant Allen, who had, a few days previous, an attack of hemorrhage of the lungs, left, in an enfeebled state, for Fort Jesup, for the purpose of medical aid."<sup>92</sup>

The interest and anxiety of Louisiana in the cause of Texas independence and anticipation of difficulties with Mexico, are reflected in a Joint Resolution of the Louisiana Legislature adopted January 16, 1843, urging the retention of the force of the 2nd Dragoons then stationed at Fort Jesup.<sup>93</sup>

By 1843 the troops had probably been withdrawn from Camp Sabine, to Fort Jesup, for in the annual report of the Secretary of War for that year the strength of the garrison at Fort Jesup is given as 418, four times as large as that of any other post in the First Military Department, comprising the States of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Kentucky, which altogether had a strength of 968 troops.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Report Sec. of War, Dec. 1, 1841, quoted in *Niles Reg.* Vol. 61, p. 250, Dec. 18, 1841.

<sup>92</sup> G. O. 20, Adj. Gen. Off. August 25, 1840.

<sup>93</sup> Sen. Doc. No. 199, 27th Cong. 2nd Sess., p. 66.

<sup>94</sup> Ho. Doc. 256, 27th Cong. 3rd Sess., Vol. 5, p. 1.

<sup>95</sup> Rep. Sec. of War, 1843, Nov. 30, quoted in *Niles Reg.* Vol. 65, p. 249, Dec. 16, 1843.

## CHAPTER XII.

## FORT JESUP "THE CRADLE OF THE MEXICAN WAR"

THIS PERIOD of quietude, however, was but an interlude before the most important and final scene in the military existence of Fort Jesup. In the presidential election of 1844 the burning question of the annexation of Texas, which had been an active issue in the national politics of the United States for a decade, was decided in favor of annexation, the position which the majority in Louisiana likewise favored.<sup>95</sup> Mexico continued to protest the annexation activity, and it was easy to see that trouble was imminent. War with Mexico was freely predicted in the press, and national interest was again focused upon the south-western frontier, and upon Fort Jesup, as the one garrisoned American post on that frontier, and the nearest to Texas and Mexico. In 1844 the 2nd Dragoons were ordered to Fort Jesup, and with this force there gathered there a group of officers who were destined to become famous: Colonel David E. Twiggs, 2nd Dragoons, later a general in the Confederate Army, after noted service in the Mexican War; Lieutenant Colonel William. S. Harney, 2nd Dragoons, who won fame in the Mexican War and in the Indian War in Florida; Captain William J. Hardee, 2nd Dragoons, later a general in the Confederate Army, Lieutenant Rufus Ingalls, 2nd Dragoons, later quartermaster general of the army.<sup>96</sup>

This reference to distinguished soldiers who *were* stationed at Fort Jesup, and others who will be mentioned in connection with General Taylor and the troops under his command, leads to the mention of several persistent and incorrect accounts of the several distinguished men having been stationed there who, in fact, never were so stationed. Mr. J. G. Belisle, in his excellent *History of Sabine Parish*, states that Sheridan and Jefferson Davis were stationed there,<sup>97</sup> and he has doubtless been followed by other writers.<sup>98</sup> In spite of tradition to the contrary, it is

<sup>95</sup> "New Orleans and the Texas Revolution" by James E. Winston, *La. Hist. Qtrly.* Vol. 10, No. 3, July, 1927; *Louisiana in the Mexican War*, by Bertha B. Kennedy, Thesis, La. State U. 1930.

<sup>96</sup> Letter, Adjutant General of the Army, April 17, 1928.

<sup>97</sup> *History of Sabine Parish, La.*, by John G. Belisle, p. 86, The Sabine Banner Press, Many, La., 1912.

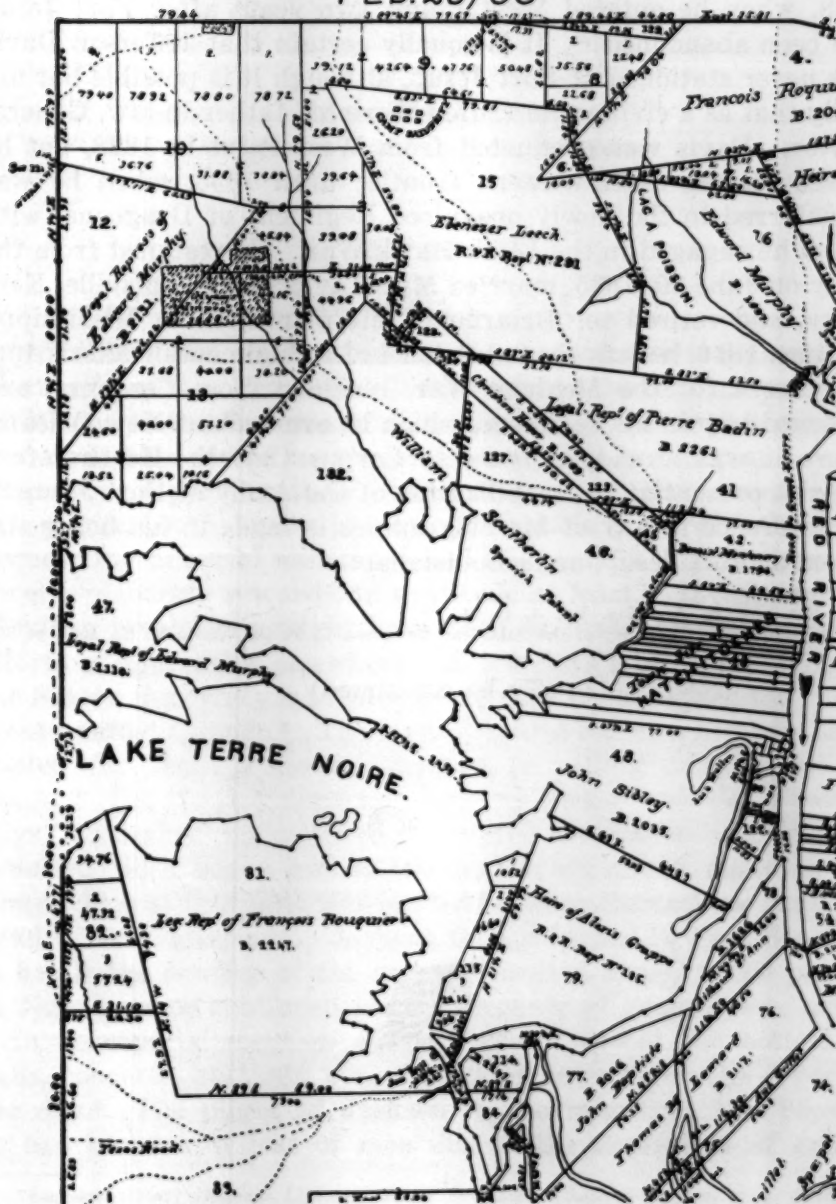
<sup>98</sup> "History of Ft. Jesup," by Mrs. Valentine Bryan, *Shreveport Journal*, May 30, 1927; "Fort Jesup," by Leon L. Booth, *Shreveport Times*, July 25, 1926, in which it is stated that Robert E. Lee was also stationed there; "Stories of Ft. Jesup," by Maude Hearn O'Fry, *Shreveport Journal*, Jan. 28, 1930; "History of Ft. Jesup," Mrs. Valentine Bryan, *Shreveport Journal*, March 6, 1929. Also Biographical and Hist. Memoirs of Northwest, La., 1890.



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North Western District La.

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General Land Office Map of Ft. Jesup at its largest extent, in 1846. The second Kitchen "L" from the lower end is the building still standing.

certain that Sheridan was never at Fort Jesup. Tradition overlooks, as it frequently does, the fact that General Sheridan was not born until March 6, 1831, nine years after the establishment of Fort Jesup, and his military career did not start until June 1, 1848, when he entered West Point, two years after Fort Jesup had been abandoned!<sup>99</sup> It is equally certain that Jefferson Davis was never stationed at Fort Jesup, although it is possible but unlikely that as a civilian he visited there his father-in-law, General Taylor. Davis was graduated from West Point in 1828, but he served on the north-western frontier until 1833, when he was transferred to the newly organized Regiment of Dragoons, with whom he engaged in the Black Hawk War. He resigned from the army on June 30, 1835, married Miss Taylor near Louisville, Kentucky, and retired to "Briarfield," his plantation in Mississippi. In June, 1846, he was elected Colonel of a Regiment of Mississippi Volunteers for the Mexican War, resigned from Congress, and hastened to join his regiment, which he overtook at New Orleans, where it was already enroute to Corpus Christi. He therefore was not present at the mobilization of the Army at Fort Jesup.<sup>99a</sup> No reference in any of his biographies is made to his being stationed at Fort Jesup, or in Louisiana.

<sup>99</sup> *Nat. Cyc. of Am. Bio.* Vol. 4, p. 64.

<sup>99a</sup> *Biographical Directory of the American Congress*, G. P. O., Wash., D. C., 1928, p. 885.

(To be continued)



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## NEW ORLEANS AND THE WAR OF 1812

By REED MCC. B. ADAMS  
New Orleans, La.

### THIRD INSTALLMENT

(Continued from July, 1933, Quarterly)

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CRISIS OF 1814

THE FIRST news of 1814 that enlists our attention is a proclamation from "the Provincial Government of the internal province of Mexico to the freemen of all nations." It was a statement of the capability of the new government with a citing of several successes as proving their claim, also giving the several steps taken to retain their advantages. The article ended with the usual request for financial assistance and the promise that such would receive elaborate rewards, in gratitude at least.<sup>1</sup> Investments in Mexican revolutions might have been as profitable as American efforts at aggression elsewhere. A few days later, a report from the *Boston Repository* is printed which severely criticized the movement against Canada.<sup>2</sup> The New England colonies are next lambasted for their traitorous conduct in selling supplies to the enemy.<sup>3</sup> But the real news was made by Jackson who, on a twelve days "excursion" as he called it, entered the Indian country, and repulsed, with heavy loss to the enemy, an attack made on his camp which at that time was located between Enotachopco and the bend of the Tallapoosa. Jackson then returned to Fort Strother to await the coming of the newly recruited army.<sup>4</sup> The papers in New Orleans continued to run accounts of general war news, with no especial mention of local affairs except for notices of balls, concerts, auctions, etc., digests of news being the order of the day.<sup>5</sup> The plight of Jackson in the meantime had become so bad because of loss of men due to the expiration of enlist-

<sup>1</sup> Louisiana State Museum Library, *L'Ami Des Lois* (Jackson Square, New Orleans). issue of January 6, 1814.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, January 11, 1814.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, January 20, 1814.

<sup>4</sup> Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, Chap. XLV. *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> L. S. M. L., *L'Ami Des Lois*, January 25, 1814.



ments, that it was thought best to direct six hundred regulars under Colonel Williams, intended for New Orleans, to Jackson instead. An article published in a New Orleans newspaper February 5, 1814 discussing the prospects of peace<sup>6</sup> based, it is likely, on the note from Castlereagh to Monroe which arrived in Washington December 30, 1813, and proposed direct negotiations for peace,<sup>7</sup> served to mitigate the loss of these forces to New Orleans. But it was the arrival, about this time, of nearly four hundred of the militia of the Second Division who were stationed at the Magazine Barracks which most heartened the inhabitants. Claiborne, seizing upon this example of patriotism, issued a proclamation renewing orders for December 25, 1813 for mobilization, directing that defaulters of every rank be proceeded against in such manner as military usage and the laws might justify. The public mind was only further inflamed, however, and Claiborne subjected to increased abuse. The newly arrived militia now protested against being sent to active service until the city furnished its quota, and offered to help collect the draft. When their offer was rejected the discontentment which resulted, so weakened their morale, that more than forty men deserted in a single night, and it was thought best to discharge the rest and send them back to their respective counties.<sup>8</sup> While Jackson continued to collect his forces, having three thousand men by the middle of March, New Orleans amused herself with chatter about the Washington Monument Lottery which was being advertised in the local newspapers.<sup>9</sup> A bit of excitement was caused by the information that a number of individuals in Louisiana were raising troops and otherwise preparing to invade Texas for the purpose of wresting it from Spain, but the expedition was abruptly terminated when, on instructions from the Federal Government, Claiborne issued a proclamation March 23, 1814 cautioning the people of Louisiana against giving it any support whatsoever, and directed that all officers, civil and military, make it their business to see that the expedition did not get underway.<sup>10</sup> Jackson and his army left Fort Strother on March 16, 1814, arriving at the Horseshoe bend of the Tallapoosa eleven days later. There they found about eleven hundred warriors of various Creek tribes behind a breastwork of logs of great strength, so arranged as to permit

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, February 4, 1814.

<sup>7</sup> F. A. Updyke, *The Diplomacy of the War of 1812* (Baltimore, 1915), pp. 165-66.

<sup>8</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 322-23.

<sup>9</sup> L. S. M. L., *L'Ami Des Lois*, March 22, 1814.

<sup>10</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 319-20.

both a direct and a raking fire. The artillery that Jackson had, proved ineffective so that soon after a flanking movement by Coffee had distracted the Indians in the fort and had cut off their avenue of retreat, the order for a general attack was given and the fort taken by assault. In the bloody carnage that followed the Indians lost nearly nine hundred warriors, whereas Jackson's loss was but fifty-five killed, and one hundred and forty-six wounded.<sup>11</sup> The direct result of the battle of Tahopeka was to free the Southwest from the Indian menace, thus enabling its forces to be sent to the defense of New Orleans later on, and to mark Jackson as the one man for the job of commanding in any campaign that was to take place in that section. As a reward for this and his many other victories Jackson was appointed a major general in the United States army, vice William Henry Harrison resigned.<sup>12</sup>

A significant rumor of an intended attack on New Orleans appeared in a letter from that city which was published in the *New York Evening Post* April 6, 1814, about four months before the expedition against New Orleans sailed from the town of Plymouth, England.<sup>13</sup> The account was based on information supplied by the captain of a schooner from New Providence that gun-boats were being built at New Providence for this purpose. This information, said to have been derived from the captain of a British man-of-war, could easily have been authentic. The rumor attracted little notice, however, and less credit.<sup>14</sup> Of more interest to the inhabitants of New Orleans was Congress' repeal of the embargo and nonimportation laws April 14, 1814, announced in New Orleans May 7, 1814.<sup>15</sup> However, it was difficult for the commerce of the city under the circumstances in which it had been placed, to recuperate from the blow which it had received under the influence of that restrictive legislation.<sup>16</sup> The financial condition of the banks was such that a plan to cause a run on the Planters Bank April 27, 1814, thereby forcing suspension of specie payment, was only prevented by the deposits of private citizens who came to its rescue.<sup>17</sup> Even so the sus-

<sup>11</sup> Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 512-22.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 546.

<sup>13</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>14</sup> Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 572.

<sup>15</sup> L. S. M. L., *L'Ami Des Lois*, May 7, 1814.

<sup>16</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 330.

<sup>17</sup> L. S. M. C., *La. Courier*, April 27, 1814.

pension of specie payment by all banks was announced the next day along with a statement of the reasons therefor.<sup>18</sup> Another interesting announcement was printed about two weeks later:

The widows and orphans of officers, seamen and marines, who have been slain or died in consequence of wounds received on board any of the public ships or vessels in the service of the United States, since the declaration of war against Great Britain on the 18th day of June 1812, will be entitled to a pension agreeably to the act of Congress passed the 4th of March 1814, on procuring or forwarding to the navy department, a certificate of lawful marriage on the part of a widow, and that she still continues the widow of a deceased seaman or marine and of the number of children living (if any) under the age of sixteen years; which certificate must be signed and duly authenticated, by one or more of the principal magistrates of the county or town where such widow may reside.

Navy Department, Washington, April 23rd 1814.<sup>19</sup>

Evidently the inactivity of the American navy during the early part of 1814 had one good result in giving the navy department the time necessary to take care of its obligations to the dependents of those who had fallen while serving in the navy during the earlier part of the war. Or, was it that the part played by the naval forces in the defense of Washington<sup>20</sup> finally aroused Congress to a better appreciation of the worth of the navy as a protection for our country. How many persons in New Orleans were benefitted by this act, I have been unable to ascertain, but I doubt that there could have been very many. But signs pointing to the imminence of the long awaited invasion of Louisiana did not escape the notice of Claiborne, and July 15, 1814 he informed the Secretary of the Navy that letters from Pensacola and Havana spoke confidently of the design of Spain to repossess herself of Louisiana, and he added:

I observe with regret that many citizens of this State seem to think that their connection with the United States has become precarious. For myself, however, I have not hesitated to assert that my country will never consent to sever the Union, and that the power does not exist that can deprive the United States of the sovereignty of Louisiana.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> L. S. M. L., *L'Ami Des Lois*, April 28, 1814.

<sup>19</sup> L. S. M. C., *La Courier*, June 6, 1814.

<sup>20</sup> Mahan, *op. cit.*, II, 340-51.

<sup>21</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 331-32.



Claiborne guessed wrong as to the identity of the invader but there could be no doubt now that Louisiana was to be invaded, and in accordance with instructions from Washington, on August 6th, 1814 Claiborne issued orders that one thousand men of the Louisiana militia be organized and held in readiness for immediate service and with the least possible delay.<sup>22</sup> When the treaty of Fort Jackson signed August 9, 1814, completely released Jackson for duty in the Floridas and Louisiana,<sup>23</sup> from that date until December 1, 1814, Jackson gave his attention entirely to the defenses of Mobile and the surrounding country, leaving to its own resources the more important position of New Orleans. The reasons which convinced him that it was wiser to look first after the defenses of Mobile were: (1) he wanted to keep the Creeks overawed, so as to retain the conquests already made; (2), the fugitives were receiving aid from the British and were likely to renew the war; (3) like other Tennesseans he had a high opinion of the value of the Mobile-Alabama-Tennessee line of communication; (4) he longed for an opportunity to strike Spain in Florida; (5) he did not during this period have clear evidence that the British would make a direct attack on New Orleans; and (6) he had on the contrary many apparent safe intimations that they would attack Louisiana through Mobile.<sup>24</sup> One of these was the visit of the British brig *Orpheus* which brought officers of that nation to the bay of the Appalachicola May 10, 1814, with several pieces of artillery.<sup>25</sup> Their object was to enter into arrangements with the chiefs of the Creek nation of Indians for obtaining a number of their warriors to join the British force which was soon expected, and intended for the attack of the fortifications of Fort Bowyer on Mobile point, the possession of which was considered as an object of great importance towards the execution of ulterior operations meditated against Louisiana. These officers easily succeeded in rallying a number of Indians around the British standard. Individuals from almost all the tribes who dwelt to the eastward of the Choctaws joined the Creeks, and were supplied with arms and drilled.<sup>26</sup> In New Orleans the preparations for defense against an invasion were continued. The general tightening up process which had commenced possibly because of Jackson's re-

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 383.

<sup>23</sup> Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, Chap. LI, *passim*.

<sup>24</sup> Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 126.

<sup>25</sup> Mahan, *op. cit.*, II, 383.

<sup>26</sup> Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 359-60.

quest to Claiborne written August 15, 1814, requesting that all the quota of the Louisiana militia which was to be furnished for the service of the United States be held in a state of preparation to march to any point at a moment's warning<sup>27</sup> is shown by the militia general orders published August 19, 1814:

. . . The Battalion composed of free men of colour, will hereafter muster for exercise and inspection, twice in each and every month, at such time and place as the lieutenant colonel commanding shall designate. The most punctual attendance is required, and it is expressly ordered that absentees of every grade be proceeded against in such manner as the laws and regulations prescribe. Monthly returns of the strength of the battalion, and on which the number and condition of the arms shall be particularly stated, to be made to the adjutant general.

WM. C. C. CLAIBORNE.<sup>28</sup>

The next threat by the British against New Orleans began with the departure of the naval vessels "Hermes" and "Carron" from the British base at Bermuda for the Appalachicola. On board was a detachment of four officers and one hundred non-commissioned officers and privates and such arms and ammunition as the fleet could spare. Colonel Nicholls was in command.<sup>29</sup> On his way to Florida, he touched at Havana for reasons which are explained by the following letter:

(Anonymous)

Havana, August 8, 1814.

Dear Sir,

I embrace an opportunity offered for Pensacola, to inform you, that an expedition has sailed from Bermuda for Mobile, who touched and left this (city) on the 11th (4?) instant, under the command of colonel Nicholls of the artillery, a brave officer well known in the European wars.

They touched here for aid in gun-boats, small vessels, &c. and for leave to land at Pensacola, all of which were refused by the captain-general. However, I learn that they are determined to land at Pensacola, with or without leave, where they will disembark their park of artillery. The colonel was conveyed with his troops in two sloops of war, the *Hermes*, commanded by the hon. W. H. Percy, and the *Carron*, commanded by the hon. P. Spencer, who, with such vessels as may be on the station, will cooperate with the land forces.

<sup>27</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 336.

<sup>28</sup> L. S. M. C., *La. Courier*, August 19, 1814.

<sup>29</sup> Mahan, *op. cit.*, II, 384.

The brig *Orpheus*, some time past, landed arms and some officers at Apalachicola, to arrange with the Creek nation for future operations against Mobile, New Orleans and that district of the country, which they effected, and caused the breaking off (of) the treaty.

The whole nation are ready to join the British troops under colonel Nicholls, who will immediately on his arrival issue his proclamation, declaring all slaves who will join their standard free and liberated forever from their masters. He will also issue another to the Indians promising all the tribes who will join him, to reinstate them in all their lands taken from them by the United States, and to guarantee the same to them forever. Having thus prepared the minds of the negroes and Indians, he will, on the arrival of two or three black regiments, from Nassau, &c. of fine troops, calculated for that climate (who may pass by this next week) push for New Orleans—first having secured and fortified Mobile point, and taken Mobile, as well as placed a force at every point on the lakes, of any importance, as well as Plaquemines, in order to cut off all trade of the Mississippi.

This force with him is small, but he will soon be reinforced from Bermuda, &c.—the flying artillery appears well calculated for his operations in that country.

When I have stated these facts, it will become your duty, and the duty of every citizen in the state, who has property or a family to protect and defend, to rise in mass, and defeat this most damnable and infamous plan of burning and carnage, the most horrible and atrocious ever projected by a civilized nation.

You have not a moment to lose; because if they get a footing, it will be very difficult to get clear of them. The commander of the sea-forces, the hon. W. H. Percy, is a very young man, . . . mild and gentlemanly, . . . but the colonel is an impatient blustering Irishman, . . . apparently brave and cruel.

I have only a moment to insist upon you again to save the state and the property of the planters at this awful crisis.<sup>30</sup>

From Havana Nicholls went directly to Pensacola, taking possession August 5, 1814 in complete disregard of Spanish sovereignty. There he busied himself trying to organize out of the fugitive Creeks and other tribes a strong body of auxiliary troops to be used against the settlements. That done, Mobile would be seized and with that as a base the British and their allies would

<sup>30</sup> Latour, *op. cit.*, Appendix, No. 2. On page eleven the date is given as the 4th.



harry the border from Georgia to Tennessee, cutting the Mississippi at some point above Natchez and isolating New Orleans so that the city would fall easily into their hands.<sup>31</sup> What Claiborne thought of such a plan is given in his address to the Executives of the several states involved:

. . . If the latest reports from Europe are to be accredited, . . . this section of the Union is to be attacked with the design of wresting Louisiana from the hands of the United States and restoring it to Spain.

A project so chimerical illy comports with that character for wisdom to which the English Government aspires, . . . Whilst the Western rivers flow, no foreign power can hold, or detach Louisiana from the United States. She may, indeed be temporarily exposed to an invading foe, but, until by some convulsion of nature, that numerous, gallant, and hardy race of men inhabiting the vast tract of country watered by the tributary streams of the Mississippi shall become extinct, the political destiny of Louisiana is placed beyond the possibility of a change. Her connection, interest, and government must remain American.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless Claiborne was relying on regular troops and the militia of the western states and territories for his principal security. As late as August 26, 1814, he felt the Louisiana militia to be disaffected. But on August 29, 1814, he was able to report to Jackson that they were better disposed, probably because at last, the citizens of Louisiana realized that they faced a real danger.<sup>33</sup> That same day in Pensacola Nicholls issued the following proclamation:

Natives of Louisiana! On you the first call is made to assist in liberating from a faithless, imbecile government, your paternal soil. Spaniards, Frenchmen, Italians, and Britons, whether settled or residing for a time in Louisiana, on you also I call to aid me in this just cause. The American usurpation in this country must be abolished, and the lawful owners of the soil put in possession. I am at the head of a large body of Indians, well armed, disciplined, and commanded by British officers—a good train of artillery, with every requisite, seconded by the powerful aid of a numerous British and Spanish squadron of ships and vessels of war. Be not alarmed, inhabitants of the country, at our approach the same good faith and

<sup>31</sup> Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 131-32.

<sup>32</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 333-34.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 341-43.

disinterestedness which has distinguished the conduct of Britons in Europe, accompanies them here. You will have no fear of litigious taxes imposed upon you for the purpose of carrying on an unnatural and unjust war; your property, your laws, the peace and tranquility of your country will be guaranteed to you by men who will suffer no infringement of theirs; rest assured that these brave Red Men only burn with an ardent desire of satisfaction for the wrongs they have suffered from the Americans, to join you in liberating these Southern Provinces from their yoke and drive them into the limits formerly prescribed by my sovereign. The Indians have pledged themselves, in the most solemn manner, not to injure, in the slightest degree, the persons or properties of any but enemies to their Spanish or English fathers; a flag over any door, whether Spanish, French, or British, will be certain protection, nor dare any Indian put his foot on the threshold thereof, under penalty of death from his own countrymen. Not even an enemy will an Indian put to death, except resisting in arms; and, as for injuring helpless women and children, the Red Men, by their good conduct and treatment to them, will (if it is possible) make the Americans blush for their more inhuman conduct lately on the Escambia, and within a neutral territory.

Inhabitants of Kentucky, you have too long borne with grievous impositions; the whole brunt of the war has fallen on your brave sons; be imposed on no longer, but either range yourselves under the standard of your forefathers, or observe a strict neutrality. If you comply with either of these offers, whatever provisions you send down will be paid for in dollars, and the safety of the persons bringing it, as well as the free navigation of the Mississippi, guaranteed to you.

Men of Kentucky, let me call to your view (and I trust to your abhorrence) the conduct of those factions which hurried you into this civil, unjust and unnatural war. At a time when Great Britain was straining every nerve in defence of her own and the liberties of the world—when the bravest of her sons were fighting and bleeding in so sacred a cause—when she was spending millions of her treasure in endeavoring to pull down one of the most formidable and dangerous tyrants that ever disgraced the form of man—when groaning Europe was almost in her last gasp—when Britons alone showed an undaunted front—basely did those assassins endeavor to stab her from the rear. She has turned on them, renovated from the bloody but successful struggle; Europe is happy and free, and she now hastens justly to avenge the unprovoked insult. Show them that you are not collectively unjust;

leave that contemptible few to shift for themselves; let these slaves of the tyrant send an embassy to Elba, and implore his aid; but let every honest, upright American spurn them with merited contempt. After the experience of twenty-one years, can you any longer support those brawlers for liberty, who call it freedom, when (they) themselves are free? Be no longer their dupes; accept of my offers; everything I have promised in this paper I guarantee to you on the sacred honor of a British officer.<sup>34</sup>

These same sentiments were expressed by Colonel Nicholls in an order of the day for the first colonial battalion of the royal corps of marines with an additional caution that sobriety above all things, should be their greatest care.<sup>35</sup> Such sentiments had not been entirely unthought of in New Orleans. As early as July a New Orleans paper had printed the following:

Will the British government make a separate peace upon liberal terms, and leave Spain to settle her own affairs with the United States?

If so will Spain, without a contest concede the whole of Louisiana to the extent claimed by our government?

How would England estimate the advantage of possession and sovereignty as regards Spain and the United States?

In a war for sovereignty would Portugal be neutral?

Would all the other powers of Europe take neutral positions?

If the parties immediately interested amicably adjust their claims, might not other allied sovereigns propose that New Orleans should be a Free independent port, under such jurisdiction and guarantee as they might deem most consistent with the general policy, and the interest of all?

In any event could it or would it be defended by the United States.<sup>36</sup>

These conjectures were over-ruled by the same paper a week later, however, because of the popular demand for active preparation against probable invasion.<sup>37</sup> While the preparations for an attack on Mobile went forward at Pensacola under the supervision of Nicholls, the British were busy in another quarter. On the morning of September 2, 1814 an English brig of war appeared

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 338-39.

<sup>35</sup> Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 361.

<sup>36</sup> C. A. of N. O., *La. Gazette*, July 14, 1814.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, July 21, 1814.



off the settlement of Barataria with a letter from Colonel Nicholls addressed to "The Commandant at Barataria" which read as follows:

I have arrived in the Floridas for the purpose of annoying the only enemy Great Britain has in the world, as France and England are now friends. I call on you, with your brave followers, to enter into the service of Great Britain, in which you shall have the rank of a captain. Lands will be given to you all, in proportion to your respective ranks, on a peace taking place, and I invite you on the following terms: Your property shall be guaranteed to you, and your persons protected—in return for which I ask you to cease all hostilities against Spain, or the allies of Great Britain—your ships and vessels to be placed under the orders of the commanding officer on this station, until the commander-in-chief's pleasure is known; but I guarantee their full value, at all events. I herewith inclose you a copy of my proclamation to the inhabitants of Louisiana, which will, I trust, point out to you the honorable intentions of my Government. You may be a useful assistant to me in forwarding them; therefore, if you determine, lose no time. The bearer of this, Captain McWilliams, will satisfy you on any other point you may be anxious to learn, as will Captain Lockyer, of the *Sophia*, who brings him to you. We have a powerful reinforcement on its way here, and I hope to cut out some other work for the Americans than oppressing the inhabitants of Louisiana. Be expeditious in your resolves, and rely on the verity of your very humble servant.<sup>38</sup>

The British emissaries were received by Jean Lafitte, and Lockyer made much of the fact that Jean's brother, Pierre, was incarcerated in the Cabildo in New Orleans at that time, having been there since July 8, 1814.<sup>39</sup> Lafitte's reply affected an acquiescence in the British proposals as he sparred for time, but when they departed September 4, 1814, he immediately sent word to Mr. Blanque, a member of the house of Representatives of Louisiana, of their visit, declaring his loyalty to the Americans. Three days later he sent another communication to Mr. Blanque protesting his devotion to the American cause, along with the

<sup>38</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 357.

<sup>39</sup> C. A. of N. O., *La. Gazette*, July 12, 1814.

anonymous letter from Havana previously quoted<sup>40</sup> and a letter addressed to Claiborne which stated his position and desires to be as follows:

I offer to you to restore to this State several citizens, who, perhaps, in your eyes, have lost that sacred title; I offer you them, however, such as you could wish to find them, ready to exert their utmost efforts in defence of the country. This point of Louisiana which I occupy is of great importance in the present crisis. I tender my services to defend it, and the only reward I ask is, that a stop be put to the prosecutions against me and my adherents, by an act of oblivion for all that has been done hitherto. I am the stray sheep wishing to return to the sheepfold. If you are thoroughly acquainted with the nature of my offenses, I should appear to you less guilty, and still worthy to discharge the duties of a good citizen. I have never sailed under any flag but that of the Republic of Carthage, and my vessels are perfectly regular in that respect. If I could have brought my lawful prizes into the ports of this State, I should not have employed the illicit means that have caused me to be proscribed. Should your answer not be favorable to my ardent desires, I declare to you that I will instantly leave the country to avoid the imputation of having cooperated towards an invasion on that point, which cannot fail to take place, and to rest secure in the acquittal of my conscience.<sup>41</sup>

Claiborne called together the principal officers of the army, militia, and navy and laid before them Lafitte's letters which had been forwarded by Pierre Lafitte who had meantime escaped. The decision was to have no intercourse or correspondence whatever with the Baratarians.<sup>42</sup> Instead an expedition in charge of Commodore Patterson and Colonel Ross prepared to leave for Barataria Bay. They arrived there September 18, 1814 just a few days after the departure of Lockyer, who having received no answer to the British proposals, left in disgust. The American forces completely demolished the smuggler's camp, carrying off rich spoils to New Orleans, while the Lafitte brothers repaired to the German Coast above New Orleans, remaining there until after Jackson's arrival in New Orleans.<sup>43</sup>

The British appeared off Fort Bowyer below Mobile on September 12, 1814. This incomplete fortification, destitute of casemates for any purpose whatsoever, had walls of sand, and was

<sup>40</sup> *Supra*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>41</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>42</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 363-64.

<sup>43</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-48.

equipped with but twenty guns of various sizes. Located as it was on the end of the long sandspit tending from the eastern mainland, and thirty miles from Mobile at the entrance to the bay, it is remarkable that this attempt to take the fort failed. However it was another case of pitting naval forces against a land fortification without the support of a land assault with the inevitable result. Three days spent in reconnoitering must have convinced Captain Percy of his position, but he evidently chose to attack regardless, probably counting on inferior resistance from the Americans under Major Lawrence. His mistake cost him his ship, the "Hermes", with 31 killed and 40 wounded, and the failure of the British at Fort Bowyer September 15, 1814, ended all activity by their forces in this region for nearly three months. The Indians were quite impressed with the success of the Americans and Jackson's only task now was to dislodge the British from their base at Pensacola. It is not long before his scruples about neutrality were thrown aside and we find him in Spanish Territory.<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile in New Orleans the Legislature had met in extra session on September 10, 1814, at the request of Governor Claiborne, for the purpose of initiating measures of preparation against invasion. But little was done, mutual distrust and lack of confidence crippling the entire body.<sup>45</sup> Five days later the citizens of New Orleans tried their own hand. A mass meeting was held at Tremoulet's Coffee House where there was appointed a committee of nine members to cooperate with the civil and military authorities in suggesting means of defense and calling forth the energies of the country to repel invasion and preserve domestic tranquility. The appointees were: Edward Livingston, Pierre Foucher, Dusuau de La Croix, B. Morgan, G. M. Ogden, D. Bouligny, J. N. Destrehan, J. Blaque, and A. Macarty. They immediately issued the following address:

Fellow-citizens:—Named by a numerous assembly of the citizens of New Orleans to aid the constituted authorities in devising the most certain means of guarding against the dangers which threaten you, our first duty is to apprise you of the extent of those dangers. Your open enemy is preparing to attack you from without, and, by means of his vile agents dispersed through the country, endeavors to excite to insurrection a more cruel and dangerous one in the midst of you.

<sup>44</sup> Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 133-36.

<sup>45</sup> Rightor, *op. cit.*, p. 142.



Fellow-citizens, the most perfect union is necessary among all the individuals who compose our community; all have an equal interest in yielding a free and full obedience to their magistrates and officers, and in forwarding their views for the public good; all have not only their property, but their very existence, at stake. You have, through your representatives in the Convention, contracted the solemn obligation of becoming an integral part of the United States of America; by this measure you secured your own sovereignty, and acquired the invaluable blessing of independence. God forbid that we should believe there are any among us disposed to fail in the sacred duties required by fidelity and honor. A just idea of the geographical situation of your country will convince you that your safety, and in a greater degree your prosperity, depends on your being irrevocably and faithfully attached to a union with the other States. But if there exist among you men base or mad enough to undervalue their duties and their true interest, let them tremble on considering the dreadful evils they will bring down upon themselves and upon us, if by their criminal indifference they favor the enterprises of the enemy against our beloved country.

Fellow-citizens, the navigation of the Mississippi is as necessary to two million of our Western brethren, as the blood is to the pulsation of the heart. Those brave men, closely attached to the Union, will never suffer, whatever seducing offers may be made to them, the State of Louisiana to be subject to a foreign power; and should the events of war enable the enemy to occupy it, they will make every sacrifice to recover a country so necessary to their existence. A war ruinous to you would be the consequence; the enemy, to whom you would have had the weakness to yield, would subject you to a military despotism, of all others the most dreadful; your estates, your slaves, your persons would be requisitioned, and you would be forced, at the point of the bayonet, to fight against those very men whom you have voluntarily chosen for fellow-citizens and brethren. Beloved countrymen, listen to the men honored by your confidence, and who will endeavor to merit it. Listen to the voice of honor, of duty, and of nature. Unite! Form but one body, one soul, and defend to the last extremity your sovereignty, your property; defend your own lives and the dearer existence of your wives and children.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 345-47.

Jackson also issued from his headquarters at Mobile on September 21, 1814, two proclamations—one addressed to the white population of Louisiana, and the other to its free colored inhabitants:

Louisianians, the base, the perfidious Britons have attempted to invade your country; they had the temerity to attack Fort Bowyer with their incongruous horde of Indians and negro assassins; they seem to have forgotten that this fort was defended by freemen; they were not long indulged in their error; the gallant Lawrence with his little Spartan band, has given them a lesson that will last for ages; he has taught them what men can do, when fighting for their liberty and contending against slaves. He has convinced Sir W. H. Percy that his companions-in-arms are not to be conquered by proclamations, and that the strongest British bark is not invulnerable to the force of American artillery, directed by the steady, nervous arm of a freeman.

Louisianians, the proud Briton, the natural and sworn enemy of all Frenchmen, has called upon you, by proclamation, to aid him in his tyranny, and to prostrate the holy temple of our liberty. Can Louisianians, can Frenchmen, can Americans, ever stoop to be the slaves or allies of Britain?

The proud, vain-glorious boaster, Colonel Nicholls, when he addressed you, Louisianians and Kentuckians, had forgotten that you were the votaries of freedom, or he never would have pledged the honor of a British officer for the faithful performance of his promise to lure you from your fidelity to the government of your choice. I ask you, Louisianians, can we place any confidence in the honor of men who have courted an alliance with pirates and robbers? Have not these noble Britons, these honorable men, Colonel Nicholls and the Honorable Captain W. H. Percy, the true representatives of their royal master, done this? Have they not made offers to the pirates of Barataria to join them and their holy cause? And have they not dared to insult you by calling on you to associate, as brethren, with them and these hellish banditti?

Louisianians, the government of your choice is engaged in a just and honorable contest for the security of your individual and national rights. On you, a part of America, the only country on earth where every man enjoys freedom, where its blessings are alike extended to the poor and the rich, she calls to protect these rights from the invading usurpation of Britain, and she calls not in vain. I well know that every man whose soul beats high at the proud title of freeman; that every Louisianian, either by birth

or adoption, will promptly obey the voice of his country, will rally round the eagle of Columbia, secure it from impending danger, or nobly die in the last ditch in its defence.

The individual who refuses to defend his rights when called upon by his government deserves to be a slave, and must be punished as an enemy to his country, and a friend to her foe.

The undersigned has been intrusted with the defence of your country. On you he relies to aid in this important duty; in this reliance he hopes not to be mistaken. He trusts in the justice of his cause and the patriotism of his countrymen. Confident that any future attempt to invade our soil will be repelled as the last, he calls not upon either pirates or robbers to join him in the glorious cause.

The second proclamation addressed to the free colored men ran as follows:

Through a mistaken policy you have heretofore been deprived of a participation in the glorious struggle for national rights in which our country is engaged. This no longer exists.

As sons of freedom, you are now called upon to defend our most inestimable blessing. As Americans, your country looks with confidence to her adopted children for a valorous support, as a faithful return for the advantages enjoyed under her mild and equitable government. As fathers, husbands, and brothers, you are summoned to rally round the standard of the eagle, to defend all which is dear in existence.

Your country, although calling for your exertions, does not wish you to engage in her cause without amply remunerating you for the services rendered. Your intelligent minds are not to be led away by false representations. Your love of honor would cause you to despise the man who should attempt to deceive you. In the sincerity of a soldier and the language of truth I address you.

To every noble-hearted, generous freeman—men of color, volunteering to serve during the present contest with Great Britain, and no longer, there will be paid the same bounty in money and lands now received by the white soldiers of the United States, viz: one hundred and twenty-four dollars in money, and one hundred and sixty acres of land. The non-commissioned officers and privates will also be entitled to the same monthly pay and daily rations, and clothes, furnished to any American soldier.



On enrolling yourselves in companies, the Major-General commanding will select officers for your government from your white fellow-citizens. Your non-commissioned officers will be appointed from among yourselves.

Due regard will be paid to the feelings of freemen and soldiers. You will not, by being associated with white men in the same corps, be exposed to improper comparisons, or unjust sarcasm. As a distinct, independent battalion, or regiment pursuing the path of glory, you will, undivided, receive the applause and gratitude of your countrymen.

To assure you of the sincerity of my intentions and my anxiety to engage your invaluable services to our country, I have communicated my wishes to the Governor of Louisiana, who is fully informed as to the manner of enrollment, and will give you every necessary information on the subject of this address.<sup>47</sup>

These addresses were held up by Claiborne for a time, for reasons of policy, there being some difficulty because of a misunderstanding between the officers of the battalion of color,<sup>48</sup> but by October 24, 1814, Claiborne informed Jackson that his addresses had been well received by all worthy citizens.<sup>49</sup> A letter from Claiborne to James Monroe dated October 24, 1814, contains a good statement of the preparations which were underway at New Orleans:

... I have the pleasure to inform you that the requisition from this State for a thousand Militia Infantry is nearly completed, and to which has been added two troops of volunteer Cavalry and one company of Volunteer Riflemen.—We shall in a few days have in this vicinity about two thousand troops, including the detached Militia, which with the local militia most of which are well armed and well disposed would enable me in case of an attack to make a good defence.—Major General Jackson continues at Mobile. and has I presume by this time been reinforced by a strong detachment of volunteers from Tennessee.—The last accounts from Pensacola, left the English in Possession of that Post, and in the daily expectation of the arrival of the Fleet, and many transports with troops.—We are extremely anxious to learn that Pensacola had been taking possession of by General Jackson, we are assured that gallant officer only awaits the Instructions of the Government to that effect and which it is hoped will not be long

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 352-56.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 365-66.

<sup>49</sup> Bassett, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, 81.

delayed.—Pensacola is in every sense of the word an enemy's Post.—It is there that the retreating Creeks found an assylum and were permitted to make every preparation to renew the war against our frontiers;—It was there that the English land and naval forces made every necessary arrangement for the late attack against the Point of Mobile, and after their repulse they again retired to Pensacola where not only all their immediate wants were supplied but they have been permitted to recruit their forces.— With a knowledge of those facts, and that Pensacola is in every point of view the most eligible spot for the debarkment of an english force destined for the attack of Louisiana, I must confess Sir it would give me the sincerest pleasure to learn that General Jackson had been authorized to pursue to that point his beaten enemy, and to drive from hence him and his protectors the spaniards.— my apprehensions for the safety of New Orleans have of late greatly subsided.— I find that General Jackson has already a respectable army, and that every preparation has been made for further reinforcements from the Western States, I find also a very patriotic Spirit pervades this State and that the best informed Citizens seems to be convinced that the happiness and prosperity of Louisiana depend upon an indissoluble union with the western and atlantic States; —for the present, Sir, every precaution will be taken to guard against a surprise, and unless we are attacked with an overwhelming force I have every reason to hope we shall give a good account of the enemy, come when he may.— I must not however disguise from you the fact, that Louisiana must look for permanent safety to (the) support of our gallant Western Brothers.<sup>50</sup>

Jackson's departure for Pensacola October 25, 1814, came like an answer to the letter just quoted. He had decided that expediency demanded that he act without the orders which he had been so earnestly requesting.<sup>51</sup> Dispatching a statement of his motives to the secretary of war, Jackson collected a force of 3,000 men and left for Pensacola, arriving there on November 6, 1814. The Spanish unable to offer much resistance, surrendered after a short skirmish. In the meantime the British, who were assembled at the Barrancas, fourteen miles from Pensacola at the entrance of the bay, took alarm and, blowing up the fort which they had occupied, departed before Jackson could get at them. As this

<sup>50</sup> Rowland, *op. cit.*, VI, 286-88.

<sup>51</sup> Bassett, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 128.

was the only fortification there of any consequence, Jackson returned Pensacola to the Spaniards and left for Mobile. From there he set out for New Orleans on November 21, 1814.<sup>52</sup>

It was clear to Jackson by this time that New Orleans was to be attacked and when he made his conviction known, the news sped through the country arousing it to a man. Everything depended on the West. The South was too weak in resources and population to offer a prompt and effective resistance to the invader. New Orleans, being exclusively an exporting city, had ceased to possess any resources when its commerce was cut off,<sup>53</sup> and the government at Washington had not as yet recovered from the British campaign on Chesapeake bay.<sup>54</sup> Yet such was the universal confidence inspired by the activity and decision of the commander in chief, added to the detestation in which the enemy was held, and the desire to punish his audacity should he presume to land, that not a single warehouse or shop was shut, nor were any goods or valuable effects removed from the city. Indeed New Orleans had the appearance of a camp, and the greatest cheerfulness and concord prevailed amongst all ranks and conditions of people.<sup>55</sup> At the beginning of the war Wilkinson had declared that against a dominant naval force and six thousand veteran troops, was needed four of our largest ships; forty gunboats; six steamboats for transportation, each to hold four hundred men and a month's provisions; four radeaux, each to mount ten twenty-four pounders; ten thousand regular troops; four thousand five hundred militia. This plan would have taken half the revenue of the government to carry out.<sup>56</sup> Claiborne and Jackson got along somehow on very, very much less. As to the preparations which Claiborne had been carrying on, I quote from his letter to Jackson dated November 4, 1814:

... Your communication of the 23rd Ultimo is before me.—The Tennessean Volunteers under General Coffy have no doubt reached you and the drafted men under General Taylor will not I hope be long delayed.—We are all solicitous to learn that affairs in the Mobile (district) were arranged to your satisfaction, and that you pay this section of your Military district an early visit.—The detachment you have ordered from Tennessee to New Orleans

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 135-43.

<sup>53</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-73.

<sup>54</sup> E. Channing, *A History of the United States* (New York, 1923), IV, 506-11.

<sup>55</sup> Latour, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>56</sup> Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, I, 571.



cannot arrive too soon.—The prospects of Peace are at an end.—The Terms submitted by the English Commissioners, would to a Conquered People, be vastly humiliating.—But a *Nation* Great, Powerful and Free could not consent *even* to consider them without compromising its dignity and honor . . . I am sensible of the inexpediency of dividing too much the *Forces in this State*; My object has been, and still is, to concentrate the greater Part of the disposable Militia Force near New Orleans.—The settlement on the *Lafourche* was exposed, and as that *Bayou* was one of the avenues by which New Orleans could be approached it was deemed prudent to assume and fortify a Position on the same, and I am happy it meets (with) your approbation;—The Detachment on *Barrataria* if the occasion requires may be recalled in Forty eight hours; In the mean time, they serve as videttes on one of the avenues of approach;—The Militia from Baton Rouge are Posted at the English Turn, where Colonel McRea contemplates throwing up a *Field* work behind which the Militia and other Troops, in the event of an attack may Fight with more Confidence.—It is believed by many persons / and myself among numbers / that the Mississippi may probably be the avenue of approach selected by the Enemy;—If so and he comes in force, the Fate of New Orleans will be decided at the English Turn . . . A wind with which a Fleet might ascend from the Balize, will not serve thro' the Turn;—Hence Batteries at the Turn could act to advantage, and the enemy to hasten his steps must make his way by land . . . Colonel Shaumberg and Mr. Benjamin Morgan descending since, to Fort Saint Philip, were solicited to favour me with their opinion as to the state of the defences on the Mississippi and of the sites most proper to be occupied . . . I now take the liberty to enclose their Original report, . . . You will observe that Fort Saint Philip is represented to be deficient in men; . . . This I learn will be immediately remedied by Colonel McRea, who (will) send on a reinforcement;—The Colonel had also previously determined to complete the Fort at the English Turn . . . how far that officer may feel himself authorized to reoccupy the post at the Balize, I am not yet fully informed.—You will observe sir, that this is deemed by Colonel Shaumberg and M. Morgan, a most important measure, and as absolutely essential to the security of this City against all approaches by way of the Mississippi . . . So far as regards the advised co-operation on the part of the Navy in the defence of the Balize and South West Pass, I have been informed by Captain Patterson, that it cannot be given, without abandoning the lakes, and leaving the Communication between New Orleans and Mobile wholly insecure . . . Cap-

tain Patterson complains much of the Want of Sailors.—The Brig Etna has not more than twenty six Persons on board;—the ship Louisiana is wholly without nor can they be obtained; six Gun Boats and one Schooner is Captain Patterson's effective force; he was asked by me whether he had authority to purchase Vessels and answered, it had been expressly denied him, but that nevertheless in case of exigency, he would purchase, but thought it useless, as additional Sailors could not be procured in this Station.—Captain Patterson seems disposed to co-operate with promptitude and zeal in such manner as his *means* permit;—but is of opinion, that these will not enable him for the Present to do more, than to guard the lakes and keep the Communication free between the Mobile (district) and this City . . .

In a late letter, I advised you of the Publication of your address to the Free men of Colour.—Its effects are beginning to be manifested;—A. M. Bourgeois a French man by birth but who has resided here for several Years, and supports a very good Character, came to me today, and said he could raise a Company of a hundred men, provided he Could receive the commission of Captain . . . I requested him to raise the same without delay, and promised to recommend him to the General commanding the District, who alone had the Power of commissioning him . . . There are I am told two other Gentlemen, who desired to raise Companies, but they have not yet named the subject to me . . .<sup>87</sup>

In the meantime the British were concentrating their forces at Negril Bay, at the west end of Jamaica. There Cochrane and Ross, who were busy burning Washington,<sup>88</sup> were to rendezvous with troops from Europe not later than November 20, 1814, raising the number of the invading party to six thousand men, independent of any men that might be spared from the fleet. Their object was to gain control of the Mississippi at its mouth so as to command internal communication with the sea; and to capture some vital position, by the restoration of which the conditions of peace might be improved, or which might be kept as the price of peace.<sup>89</sup> Colonel Richmond, Chief of Staff for the 87th Division, in an illustrated lecture on the Battle of New Orleans given at the annual dinner of the New Orleans Chapter of the Reserve Officers' Association January 7, 1932, seemed to believe that what

<sup>87</sup> Rowland, *op. cit.*, VI, 395-98.

<sup>88</sup> Mahan, *op. cit.*, II, 340-51.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 385.

the English Statesmen had in mind when issuing their statement of the objects as given above, was to trade New Orleans for New England, or, if they decided not to keep it themselves, to give it to Spain, probably receiving compensation elsewhere,<sup>60</sup> and the relationship of Spanish and English affairs ever since the Peninsular campaigns, would seem to support the last contention. Be that as it may, Jackson and the force which he was to successfully oppose, were converging on New Orleans, soon to be the scene of their contest. Jackson arrived there on December 2, 1814, having crossed Lake Pontchartrain from Covington to the mouth of Bayou St. John, then passing over the road along the bayou to New Orleans. Here he and his aides were taken to the residence of Daniel Clark, the first representative of Louisiana in the Congress of the United States, where they were met by a committee of the state and city authorities, and of the people. These included Governor Claiborne; Nicholas Girod, the mayor of New Orleans; Livingston and Grymes, leading attorneys; Commodore Patterson; and other leading figures of New Orleans at that time. After a brief meeting, Jackson and his party retired.<sup>61</sup> Jackson's first move was to call together all the engineers of the city to obtain all the necessary information concerning the topography of the city, and armed with this information, he immediately set about preparing the necessary defenses.<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile the British had also been busy. November 24, 1814, the British fleet with the invading force aboard, received its final inspection and review at Negril Bay, Jamaica, British West Indies. There was a force of nearly twenty thousand men, and a fleet of fifty ships carrying a thousand guns and perfectly appointed in every particular. In two days the entire fleet was underway. The American coast was first sighted by the main force December 10, 1814, which day they anchored opposite to the Chandeleur Islands, near the entrance to Lake Borgne.<sup>63</sup> Commander Jones, in charge of the American naval forces in that quarter, immediately notified Jackson at New Orleans of the first arrival of the British. His forces being so small as to render any attack foolhardy, Jones cheerfully assumed his role of scout, maintaining contact with the enemy, until on December 13, 1814, by an overwhelmingly superior force, his miniature force was captured.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> H. R. Richmond, *The Battle of New Orleans* (New Orleans, 1932), files of the 87th Division.

<sup>61</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-18.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>63</sup> Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, 37-42.

<sup>64</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, IV, 398-401.



The British invasion was now underway in dead earnest. Sufficient forces were opposed to the defenses of New Orleans to take the city with ease. Indeed the British were so certain of taking New Orleans, that several gentlemen with their families were on board the ships of the fleet who had been appointed to civil offices in the city of New Orleans. Many wives of the officers were on board,<sup>65</sup> and the British would have captured New Orleans, had it not been for one man, Andrew Jackson. He it was who played his "poor hand" so well, that even with a "stacked deck" the English were unable to win. Our next consideration is to be a brief account of the battle which was fought and its consequences, and in that account one shall see the southwesterner when threatened by an invasion of his birthright to freedom, resisting this invasion with the same spirit of grim determination with which he had hewed a place for himself out of the wilderness.

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<sup>65</sup> Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, II, 40.

(To be Continued)

Note by Editor of Quarterly—On account of pressure on our space, we have been compelled to postpone the usual installments of the French and Spanish indices. They will appear in the January, 1934, number as usual.





